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ST ALBANS ABBEY HERTF.

W. J. Rogers

Engr.

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
ANCIENT AND ROYAL FOUNDATION,
CALLED
THE ABBEY OF ST. ALBAN,
IN THE
COUNTY OF HERTFORD,
FROM THE FOUNDING THEREOF IN 793,
TO ITS DISSOLUTION IN 1539.
EXHIBITING THE LIFE OF EACH ABBOT,
AND THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS RELATING TO
THE MONASTERY,
DURING HIS RULE AND GOVERNMENT.
EXTRACTED FROM THE MOST FAITHFUL AUTHORITIES AND RECORDS,
BOTH PRINTED AND MANUSCRIPT.

BY THE REVEREND PETER NEWCOME,
RECTOR OF SHENLEY, HERTS.

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P R E F A C E.

IT is not expected, that a book, written on so local a subject, should excite any great degree of public and general notice ; nor that a subject so antique and obsolete should raise the curiosity of modern readers. It is not, therefore, a prospect either of fame or profit that has urged the author to this undertaking. But, beholding daily the venerable fabrick of St. Alban's church, the only remains of a large structure, and hearing something like tradition still dwelling in the country, relating to its history, though with much uncertainty and incoherency, the author determined to discover its true history, and, as far as he could collect from authentic records, commit the same to writing, for the information of the country adjoining, and for the subversion of much error and ignorance. He was encouraged farther by this consideration, that there is not extant in our language,

guage, nor to be found, except in the fundamental statutes and rules of the religious, any historical account of the domestic œconomy of those houses, or of their internal usages, customs, and habits of living. The same may be said of the worship which the monks were perpetually celebrating, and of their religious rites and ceremonies. These defects in our ecclesiastic history will be in a great measure supplied by the following narrative, and it will add to our common stock of historic knowledge to present the English reader with a more minute detail of the monastic life: and this work will probably be the more acceptable on this account, that it will leave on record some historic matter, which has been quite forgotten or unknown in these kingdoms for 250 years; and which, from suppressing monasteries abroad, is likely to be forgotten there also.

When the blessed Jesus commanded his disciples to preach to all the world, and baptize men into his name and religion, he seems not to hint at, or to intimate, any other order of men for instructing the world than diligent preachers; yet, in less than 300 years, another order of men arose, who supposed themselves equal in authority with the apostles and their followers, if not to preach the word, yet to give a more perfect example. This order began, indeed, with a few only, who chose to commence hermits, and devote themselves to a quiet contemplative life; but from them it became a more general practice, and these devout men agreed to assemble in numbers, to form a small society, and to live by the culture of a garden and other labours of their hands. This usage spread itself through all the Eastern countries, wherever the church of Christ was established: and, though the history of the Eastern and African churches is little known to us, owing to the utter ruin and devastation which
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they suffered from the hands of the Saracens and the conquests of Mahomet, yet sufficient proof remains that a very great number of monasteries were established, and did flourish, in all those Christian countries; and at this day the Greeks, who compose the remains of the ancient Christians, are found settled and established in these monasteries. All the bishops of the East (and in that name we must comprehend the most learned, ingenious, and pious, men, that ever preached the Gospel) gave countenance and encouragement to this practice, and especially the great Basil, bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia (a).

From the example and benefit of them in the East, the bishops in the West recommended the institution; and, by the end of the sixth century, all the Christian countries of Europe had adopted the same, and monasteries for both sexes became reputable foundations, and were viewed with great religious esteem. At first, it is probable, they were the proper attendant of every episcopal see, and had their fixed residence together with the bishop at his cathedral: but, in process of time, they became separate and distinct endowments, subordinate to the bishops; and, by the covenants of the founder, subject to his visitation and liable to his censures. And bishops, having perhaps but few clergy, and many parts of their diocese without any instruction, and not even divided into parishes, and many parishes being quite strangers to a church, could make no objection to any concurring help in the work of the Gospel. In the beginning of Christianity, and in the early days of the church, the number of episcopal clergy was very few, and these monastic foundations were generally made in the most solitary and

(a) Vide Cotelierius in his *Monum. Græc. Eccles.*

unpeopled places. They were calculated, indeed, at first for the religious improvement, and spiritual benefit of the few who assembled together, and lived in a conventual manner, in meditation, prayer, and devout worship; and they could influence others by their example much more than by any instruction; for, these being confined to their walls, and having no duties abroad, the few episcopal clergy were the only persons intrusted with the labour of reforming mankind. This distinction is proper to be kept in mind, in order to account for the variance and emulation that arose, in after times, between these two branches of the clergy. The seculars, being under the direction of their bishop, were sent out into the world, to preach at large or else to be fixed in one particular place; but, in either case, their subsistence was slender, and made to depend on contributions; for, supposing that tithes were enjoined to be paid throughout the kingdom by Ethelwolph, a Saxon king, yet this provision was very scanty, because the country was not, except in a few places, either cultivated or inclosed: and it is well known, that, until the Conquest, when the king put the church on a better footing, and gave to it more certain as well as more ample provision, the maintenance of the clergy, that is, of the seculars, depended on a distribution from the bishop. But, though the seculars, from that time, were better enabled to live and exercise their functions in a more respectable manner, yet the regular clergy had long ago, and did still, surpass them, in number, dignity, and public esteem. The parish priest was but one in a large district of country, and his labours consisted in preaching the word, in prayer and public worship, and in administering the sacraments to the pious and religious, living himself in a plain and simple manner; whereas the regulars employed themselves in a gaudy and
ostentatious.

ostentatious worship, enjoying plenty, and oftentimes a luxurious abundance, at their table : while the former were occupied in instructing the living and urging the necessity of an holy life, the latter were entirely busied in praying for the dead. This was their professed employment and occupation : and this circumstance alone procured them the admiration of the vulgar, brought great gifts and endowments from the rich, and many pious legacies from the dying. It is astonishing to behold, that, upon the single foundation of our natural anxiety concerning a future state, these men built their success and consequence : and it is proper to observe, how ill-instructed men were in those days, when they chose rather to trust their future concerns to the efficacious labours of others than to their own pious cares and strict holiness of life. The pretended interest, which the monks were thought to have with Heaven, might be a reason, with even very pious persons, to employ them after their own decease ; but it is probable that they found evil livers, and the perpetrators of great crimes, to be the most copious source of liberality and donation : inasmuch as such persons were fearful and distrustful even of their own repentance, and, therefore, were desirous of hiring others to aid and assist in the work of their salvation. And, as this praying for the dead was the professed occupation of these numerous bodies of clergy, so it will appear in the following sheets with what art and contrivance they framed all the doctrines of futurity, to favour the practice, and promote the pious fears of the anxious offender.

Thus much will suffice to account for their augmentation, and riches, and number ; but, in the course of this work, it will farther appear, with what art and application they succeeded in worldly grandeur, and in what manner they
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withdrew from any subjection to the diocesan, until, in short, the abbot surpassed him in external splendor, and the abbey became a rival to the cathedral: and this went on, till, at the dissolution, it was seen that the mitred abbots, who had by degrees been labouring for pre-eminence, were more in number, in the House of Lords, than the bishops. For, in 1514, the abbots were 28 in number, and the bishops only 18 or 19.

There were many other considerations that tended to give the monks increase and consequence; and abbeyes were found to be such beneficial institutions that they would have stood their ground unto this day, if their great possessions and revenues had not tempted indigent courtiers to plot and combine against them. Their utility appeared in these respects, that they exercised great hospitality towards the poor, and this was done at one tenth of the expence which the poor now create, by being maintained by a legal provision: the monasteries were in general the houses of reception for all the sick, and they were here nursed and cured: they generally employed masters to teach the poor children of the neighbourhood: they entertained all persons who were ingenious in any art or science, and often transcribed books, when but a few understood the art, or could undertake it; and there is now extant a chronicle, composed and printed here, in the year 1484, under the countenance then given to this particular abbey by Richard III. these houses also kept public registers of all great transactions; to them are we indebted for all our English historians, down to the time of the dissolution. They were possessed, indeed, of all the learning that was in any repute at the time prior to the coming of the friers, and the monasteries generally furnished the men who were fit for embassies abroad, or for high

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employments at home : and, to their honour be it spoken, that all the inferior officers, both in the law-courts, and in the civil departments of government, who are called clerks, owe this appellation to these houses, whence, or from cathedrals, the first officers were taken. Their landed property was so great, at the time of the dissolution, that it was said to be one-third of all the lands of England ; but this account is probably aggravated : yet, whatever were their temporal possessions, they were always found to be good landlords, ever ready at improvements, and doing many great works in inclosing, or draining, or planting, which individuals could not undertake. In truth, they did more to civilize mankind, and to bring them within the comforts of society, than any set of men of any denomination ever have done. And yet the ungrateful world, that was enjoying the fruit of their labours and their riches, now beholding the edifice to be completed, cast down the builders and the scaffold, as if no longer useful.

In spite of all the calumny that was thrown out against them, nothing so well proclaims their utility as this ; that they maintained themselves in repute, some of them 1000 years, and many for the space of 5, 4, and 300 years ; and that, when they were dissolved, Edward VI. and his counsellors found it necessary to endow new hospitals, build new schools, and provide new relief for the poor and helpless.

Yet, notwithstanding the advantages of these houses, the good that arose from them could not prevent their ruin and downfall. And it must be confessed that, on viewing them in a civil and political light, they will appear too much attached to the Roman pontiff, to be good subjects to their natural sovereign : as they owed their origin to the pope,

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so they ever adhered to HIM more than to their lawful king ; and were at all times so obedient to their supreme at Rome as to become his instruments and agents in all his exactions, and in all his contests with the kings of England. But not so was it with the bishops and their clergy : for, though it was a perpetual contest who should appoint the bishops, and, if one of these sovereigns ventured to appoint, the other always claimed a right to approve or reject, yet the bishops and their clergy generally testified the most faithful attachment to their own sovereign : and, to the honour of the Episcopal Clergy be it spoken, they have ever shewn themselves the best friends to monarchy and lawful government.

These sheets will exhibit a just picture of these monastic clergy, and the manners of the times most prevalent among the laity and great men, especially the courtiers ; and they will lead us to a comparison of times, such as ought to excite in us a most sincere gratitude to God, that we are allowed to live in an enlightened age, free from superstitious worship, and in which the way to religious truth is open to all inquirers ; and in this comparison also will be seen how superior the public worship of our church now is to any of the ancient forms in this land, for the purpose of edification, and administering all the comforts of that true religion which Christ was sent to establish here on earth.

These religious foundations fell with such undeserved calumny and slander, that it is but common justice to restore their character, and give them their due praises, wherever the same can be done ; and, I trust, if all others were as free from corruption and ill-government as this of St. Alban, it will be seen how unjustly they were accused, and their overthrow will appear to have been effected for other reasons than pretended
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misrule and secret corruption.—As they had ever been the main pillar and support of the Papal power, it was natural and consistent to abolish the members, after the head was rejected. They were bodies so nearly allied to the Popedom, that they must fall with it : and, though a gradual reformation might have been effected in them, yet, in the new plan of church-government, they were deemed unnecessary ; and the new head of the church, and his counsellors, wished to have as few subjects, in the church to be governed, as might be : accordingly, by dissolving the regular clergy, and limiting the Church to the episcopal order of seculars, they rejected above 100,000 of the former, and retained about 8000 of the latter.

Whatever was the pretext, the real truth was, that their temporal power and wealth tempted their downfall : and, in spite of all the good and real merit that was to be found in them, they fell a prey and spoil to an extravagant monarch and his necessitous courtiers. In the legislature of those times there were many great and able men ; but, whatever cause there may be to charge them with want of piety, there is no room to accuse them of any want of worldly wisdom, or of their embracing that self-denial, and contempt of the world, which they were so ready to condemn in the monks ; they made laws and ordinances to support a new religion, when they could enrich themselves by suppressing the old. But the bright example of the bishops and clergy who submitted to the flames at that time will appear more illustrious, when it is seen how just and rational was their opposition to the worship then in use, as well as to the doctrine ; the first having in it as little of true piety and devotion as the latter had of reason and revealed truth. It was the blood of those men who could

die for the truth that gave the new establishment a firm and stable foundation ; when neither the will of the prince nor the laws of his parliaments could have been able, without that cement, to effect a new construction and edifice.

The study of antiquity is no longer confined to the contemplation of rust, but is now conducted on such principles of real knowledge, that it is become a kind of liberal science ; and it hath received so much help and encouragement from the munificent care of our legislature, that every man who deals in researches owes to them abundance of thanks, for facilitating his enquiries. The author of this history hath drawn his materials from the most authentic sources, and advanced nothing but what he finds written and recorded by most indisputable authority. The first part, which comes down to Edward III. is furnished by Matthew Paris and by Walsingham : the first was a monk who lived in this abbey in the reign of Henry III. and whose writings shew (and all subsequent mention concurs), that he was a man of great diligence in collecting his annals, and of a temper too brave and independent, to comply with, or to flatter, the usurping pretensions of either the pope or the king ; and, with this disposition, he exhibits a veracity that must gain the credit of all his readers : the other likewise was a monk of this abbey, and lived about the time of Henry IV and V. The second part extends from about 1340 to the dissolution, and until the reign of Edward VI. in which period the same Walsingham, and many other manuscripts little known (consisting of old chartularies, leiger books, and short histories, compiled in this abbey) set forth a continued and regular account of most great and material events. Of these manuscripts some
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are in the Cotton Library, some among the Harleian Collections, and some in other libraries, as will be mentioned when they are quoted. The information that follows the dissolution is drawn chiefly from the papers in the Augmentation Office: and the steps that preceded and accompanied the dissolution, are verified by many authentic documents, collected by Rymer in the 14th volume of the *Fœdera*.

C H A P T E R I.

Of Ancient Verulam.

THE first and earliest accounts that we have of this island and its inhabitants are from such Romans as were actually present here and bore command; or else from the historians and writers at Rome who thought proper to commit to letters the transactions of those Roman leaders. And these little remains of history give us a very mean opinion of the Britons when the Romans first visited them, under Cæsar, in the year 54, before the Birth of Christ. The first mention of the Britons is from Cæsar himself; who carried his arms from Gaul with a view to make a conquest; or at least to satisfy a learned curiosity: and the following intimations of the Britons come from Tacitus and Cæsar. From their accounts it is certain, that the Britons had no cities, towns, or buildings, of any lasting materials, or any fixed duration (a). *Civitas*, whenever mentioned by Cæsar, means only a confederacy and alliance of men, united for the purposes of government; and he expressly saith, book V. 17, ‘that their towns were nothing more than places fortified or made defensible by woods, or bogs and ditches; and that these were made use of as dwellings only in war; for in peace they lived scattered and dispersed.’ And the same may be understood of the Britons, which Herodian saith, lib. 7, of the Germans; ‘that their habita-

(a) Cæsar says, B. V. cap. 10, *Ædificia Gallicis consimilia, plurima.*

'tions were mean, because they did not understand the way of building with brick or stone.' And, therefore, we may well give credit to Tacitus, when he says of Agricola, that, 'whereas the Britons were dispersed and rude, and thereby the more prone and ready for war, he gave them encouragement to build temples, forums, and houses.' Agric. cap. XXI. And in this respect doth *oppidum* in these writers differ from *civitas*; that, whereas the last meant only a community or kind of civil institution, the first meant a place of security and mutual aid and help, *ab ope*. And the *castella* of these authors signifies such places as the Romans had made strong and defensible, with buildings and works after the manner of their own country.

It is observable that Cæsar names no particular city or town, yet describes the town of Cassivelaunus; and, from the progress of Cæsar and his distance from the Thames, and from that King's being the head or chief of the league, and probably from his name, which signifies the King of the Cassii, his town might be no other than what was then and afterwards called Verulam: and this conjecture receives much strength from this circumstance, that the place and situation of Verulam did exactly answer the description of a British town, *silvis paludibusque munitum*, so long as the great pool and lake remained, which is now turned to dry land. Cæsar adds, that on his arrival before the place, he finds it *egregiè naturâ atque opere munitum*; but incapable of sustaining the assault of his soldiers; who, making their attack on two sides, gained the town; and the enemy after some delay fled out on another side. Cæs. Com. V. 17.

Under Augustus no attempts were made against Britain; nor under the two following Emperors, untill the reign of Claudius. Tacitus says (a) 'that Britain suffered a long oblivion; the Emperor Augustus calling it prudence and good advice to forbear it; Tiberius would have it be looked on as an injunction on him to forbear. The next Emperor, Caligula, from the fickleness and mutability of his temper, and from the seditions and wars among the Germans; turned no thoughts towards this island.' Claudius, on consultation with Vespasian, resumed the conquest of it, and sent over an army under the command of Aulus Plautius; and he was soon after succeeded by Ostorius Scapula. Such was the success of their arms, that the part of Britain next to Gaul was reduced to the form of a province; and a colony of veterans was established at a place called Camalodunum or Maldon (b). Didius Gallus next commanded; and after him Vera-

(a) In Agricola, cap. 13.

(b) Ibidem, cap. 14.

nus, who died within the year; and he was succeeded by Paulinus Suetonius. This general, anno 61, carried his arms to the western side of the island, and was preparing to assault and vanquish the isle of Anglesey (Mona); from whence he found the enemy received great succours, and which was the principal seat of the Druids, who were the rulers and counsellors of the land. His conquest of this place had scarce succeeded, when news was brought that the Britons in the province, viz. the Iceni and the Trinobantes, under the conduct of Boadicia, had taken arms; and assaulted the colony, and slain all the Romans therein; and then, marching away to meet Petilius Cerialis, a lieutenant coming to the aid of the colony with the ninth legion, had routed the legion, and slain all the foot; the horse having escaped.

This was the first colony planted by the Romans in Britain, and is an argument of the safe footing (as they thought) they had got there, and of the submission of its inhabitants. But the total overthrow of the colony, and the immense slaughter made of the Romans through the province, amounting to 70,000, according to Tacitus (a), shews too the fierce resentments of the ancient Britons, and the weak state in truth of their new masters. Suetonius quitted Mona, and marched back to London (and this is the first mention in ancient history of this place), which says the historian was *Cognomento quidem coloniae non insigne, sed copia negotiatorum et commeatumum maxime celebre*: this shews that London was then very considerable as a port, and much frequented by merchants and traders. And by the hesitation of Suetonius, whether he should save London and abandon the rest, or preserve the rest at the loss of this place only, and by his chusing the latter, it appears that London was then a very considerable place in the province, and most convenient for communication with the continent; but still not a place chosen for a colony. Tacitus says also (b), that Verulamium, a free town, was involved in the same destruction; and hints that this was a rich and opulent town, and therefore was a greater temptation to a plundering foe than mere castles and military posts; all which the enemy passed by, in order to make a good booty at Verulam: *Omissis castellis, praesidiisque militum, quod uberrimum spoliant, et defensoribus intutum; laeti praedae, et aliorum segnes petebant.*

Suetonius having determined to abandon London, notwithstanding the tears and intreaties of the people there who had escaped the massacre, fought the enemy, under the command of Boadicia; and, though attended with only ten thousand men, attacked and defeated the Bri-

(a) Ann. L. XIV. cap. 33.

(b) Eod. cap.

tons; and slew in the battle and pursuit near 80,000, as Tacitus reports; and with the loss of 400 Romans slain, and as many wounded. The place of this signal defeat is described by the historian as being very narrow and confined; *Deligitque locum arctis faucibus, & a tergo sylva clausum, & in fronte apertam planitiem*. But it is uncertain where to fix it among the Icenii and Trinobantes; as it is a description that may suit a thousand places, even at this time; and therefore probably was suitable to many more, when the country was in its wild and natural state. But thus much may be said, that, having but a small army, he chose a place between two hills or eminences, *angustias loci pro munimento*; which being immoveable, and having undergone no such change as the wood in the rear, and the plain in front, possibly may, this circumstance may lead the curious antiquary to form good conjectures as to the spot where this memorable battle was fought (a).

Tacitus says, that as many as 70,000 Roman citizens and their allies perished in that insurrection of the Britons, at the three places which he has mentioned; namely, the Colony, London, and Verulam. Which great number proves how numerous and how well settled the Romans were in the province, and especially in these three towns or cities. At the colony they had built a temple in honour of the Emperor Claudius, set up an image of victory, and instituted a priesthood for the solemnities of religion. But they had not enclosed the seat of their colony (Camalodunum) with any fortification; *dum amœnitati prius quam usui consulitur* (b). And thus, in the midst of apparent peace, they were on a sudden surrounded by the enemy, and cut off; and even the ninth legion, coming to their relief, shared the same fate. London seems at this time to have received no augmentation of honours, or any advantage whatever, from the Romans; but to have been considered as a great port and place of merchandize; whereas Camalodunum being converted into a colony (for certainly it was before a British town), and thereby settled with a number of veterans, *in coloniam Camalodunum recens deducti* (c), now became a place of arms, the seat of justice (for Catus Decianus was there as Procurator, and not far from the place, with 200 men, when the Britons made the assault), and the capital also of the new province. These first improvements make this probable, and also its middle situation between the Icenii on the East and the Trinobantes on the West; whereas London was too near one extremity; and perhaps Verulam was on the limits of the pro-

(a) Tac. An. XIV. 37. (b) Ann. XIV. 31. (c) Tac. Agric. XIV. 31.

vince westward, and thought ill situated for the capital of their new conquest, but well adapted for its boundary and barrier. But as Tacitus calls Verulam a Municipium, this denotes its augmentation and advancement since it had been subject to the Romans; who would scarce have given the old inhabitants the privilege of bearing offices, and of participating in a corporation or local government, unless there had been a coalition between them, and a friendly understanding. Or, more properly speaking, the distinction between the Colonia and the Municipium was this, that, whereas in the first the kind of government instituted therein was purely Roman, and none but the Roman soldiers or citizens brought thither could be chosen magistrates, or have a vote in the choice; in the Municipium the old inhabitants were allowed these privileges, and enjoyed a participation of the same rights of office and government, of law and property, as the Romans themselves; and this was esteemed the most prudent, as well as most honourable way of treating their vanquished foes. In this state was Verulam when the Britons destroyed it and its people, in 61 years after Christ; and to this pre-eminence had it risen since Aulus Plautius first invaded Britain, in the year of Christ 42, and second of Claudius. Dio saith that Claudius passed into Britain in person, and, having joined Plautius, took the command of the army, and conducted the enterprize against Cunobelin, whose chief city was Camalodunum; and, having defeated him, thus got possession of that place. Vespasian and Titus, afterwards emperors, served in these wars under Plautius, and signalized themselves by their successes in the Isle of Wight, and in fighting the enemy 30 times. Vespasian commanded the 2d legion. Plautius commanded only three years, and then returned to Rome; and Ostorius came in the 10th of Claudius, or about the 50th of the Christian æra, and died about four years after in the command; during whose time the colony was established at Camalodunum; the famous King of the Ordovices, Caractacus, defeated and taken prisoner; and the Roman authority acknowledged by the Iceni and the Trinobantes; that is, by the people who inhabit the present counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and the counties of Essex and Middlesex.

The flourishing state of Camalodunum before its overthrow in 61, and likewise of Verulam, may be well conceived from this circumstance, viz. that there are now extant coins with both names on them, probably struck by the Romans in memory of their successes, and the establishment made at the former by Claudius (a).

Nero, then Emperor, sent reinforcements to Suetonius, out of Germany; being a supply of 2000 legionary soldiers, 8 cohorts of

(a) See Camden.

auxiliaries, and 1000 horse. By which means the 9th legion was re-instituted and compleated; but Suetonius was hindered from prosecuting the war by some dissensions that arose between him and the new Procurator, Julius Classicianus, who had been sent in the place of Catus, on which Suetonius delivered up his commission to Petronius Turpilianus. This commander, and others who succeeded him, were content to act on the defensive, and nothing of enterprize was attempted untill Vespasian (now Emperor, and whose fame and exploits were well remembered in Britain) sent over Julius Agricola to command the 20th legion, Vedius Bolanus being lieutenant, or chief commander; but his commission expiring this year, Petilius Cerealis succeeded, and the next year (after Christ 72) Agricola had the command. And in that summer he made a conquest of the Isle of Mona, or Anglesey. In the second year of his command Vespasian died; but he was continued in his employ under Titus, and then under Domitian; and, through envy only, recalled by him in the year 92. The chief exploits of his arms had appeared in the north of this island; and, therefore, nothing was done by him towards a re-establishment of the colony at Camalodunum, or of the municipium at Verulam. Nevertheless, all the southern part of the island was in subjection to the Romans; and these places recovered by virtue of peace and quiet, and under the command of such inferior officers, both civil and military, as were posted in them. And nothing so much demonstrates the diligence and attention of the Romans in improving their new conquests, as the great number of cities or towns which they had built and augmented, and the military ways which they had established, by the time when Antoninus caused his survey or itinerary to be framed, about 155 after Christ.

For, beside Camalodunum, they had Canonium, which is well conjectured by Bishop Gibson to be Writtle, and not, as Camden supposed, Chelmsford; also Cæsaromagus, or Dunmow, and Colonia, or Colchester, all in the neighbourhood of Camalodunum. This last place (Colonia) has been mistaken by some for the colony which Claudius established; but by Tacitus that colony is expressly named Camalodunum; and Colonia was a military station, on a place whose name was easily latinized, perhaps, from some British word; and if a conjecture be allowed, as we find many places called from the trees most prevalent in them, as Berkshire from the birch-trees, Oakley from the Oaks, Bucks from the beech-trees, just as Chenies from the Norman *les chênes* (oaks), why may not Colonia have come from the British *côllen*, which signifies hazels; but certain it is that the said town, called Colonia, had some origin of that nature and likeness, because the name
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of the river is Coln, and several villages adjoining therto; as, Coln Engaine, Earls Coln, and White Coln, are so named from the river. All which were either derived from one common and general root, or else were places within the limits and jurisdiction of Colonia (a).

As for Verulam, it is quite uncertain whence it derived its name; for, though the British tongue hath Ffêr for strong, and although there was a town in Italy, not far from Rome, among the Hernici, called Verulæ, I will not affirm either of these to be the origin of Verulam.

The towns in the vicinity of Verulam, we find by the Itinerary, (and probably there were no other towns beside those that stood on the highway, though there might be Stations) were Sullomacæ; which Camden would place at Blochley Hill. Which latter place agrees with the distances both from London and from Verulam with the Itinerary. And on the other side is Durocibrivæ, which he would place at Flamstead, 7 miles from Verulam. But there is still visible, beside the Watling Street way, or road from London to Verulam, another original Roman road, through the forest of Enfield Chase, called at this day Camel Way; and which seems to have been the road from Verulam to Camalodunum, or Canonium. Magiovinium also, in the Itinerary, must probably be Dunstable, which has at this day the ruined aspect of something once great, regular, and considerable. It stands at the point where the Ikenild Way crosses the Watling Street Way; and, though no mention is made of it earlier than its being much improved, and augmented with a royal house, and a monastery, by Henry I. yet it is probable that it was in the Romans time a considerable and handsome town.

Cæsar says (a) 'that the maritime parts of Britain were chiefly inhabited by people from Gaul and the Belgæ; who called their new towns and habitations by the names of those places which they had left.' We cannot discern any marks of this in Verulam, nor find any name in Gaul that bears a resemblance to it. And therefore it is probably of British origin; and, as that language has in it the word bêrff, signifying a spear, and llan denoting a place for such particular uses, it is possible that the first British name might signify something military, a place of arms; especially if Cassivelaunus, the King and General against Cæsar, had here his palace and residence.

(a) And that Colchester had its name from being seated on the Coln, and that this river was so called from the trees there most abounding, may be thought farther probable from this circumstance; that in the county of Gloucester there is a river of this name; and near it, a village or parish called Hazleton; and a few miles further off, another village called Nutgrove. And there are many rivers in England called Coln.

(a) Com. L. V. cap. 10.

The Romans made a compleat conquest of the whole island south of the rampart, which Hadrian drew from Carlisle to Newcastle, and which was repaired and much improved by the Emperor Severus. And in the vicinity of that wall or barrier, they had more posts and stations, and of course there are now more remains of Roman antiquity, than any where else in the kingdom. The south and west parts of Britain being in a more quiet and submissive state, fewer garrisons were kept there, and consequently fewer Roman towns or antiquities of any sort are there to be found or discovered. The sovereignty of the Romans lasted until the middle of the 5th century (a), though not without frequent rebellions and insurrections; and the constant guard or army for keeping the conquest had been at least three legions of veterans, and great numbers of auxiliaries, levied in other countries, and quartered in different parts of Britain. In the time of Severus the standing army of the empire was 29 legions, of 6000 men each; of which three were assigned for the custody of Britain, besides perhaps as many more in Dalmatian horse, and other foreign auxiliaries. One legion, viz. the 2d, and afterward the 20th, was stationed a long time at Chester; the 6th was fixed at York; and perhaps the other, which probably was the 9th, might be stationed at the wall or frontier. In order to keep the country quiet, the Romans employed vast numbers of the country people, together with their soldiers, in constructing the military ways or roads, remaining to this day, and in many places visible. Our ancient historians mention only four, and in the laws of Edward the Confessor there is mention made, *De pace quatuor Cheminorum*; but there were many more, according to the Itinerary, though perhaps only four might be kept up and supported by the Saxons and the Saxon kings.

Now, when we survey this island as the place where once the Romans, the most potent and polished people on the earth, bore sway, and held all in subjection, we are apt to imagine that they should form great cities, construct vast bridges, or aqueducts, erect stately temples, and build places like those at Rome for the public baths; or, as amphitheatres. for the pleasure and amusement of the people. But no vestiges of that sort are to be found; no great bridge that should stand for ages; no remains or even the column of a temple; no forum; no public baths; no ruined palace, or even town; no great pier for the better convenience of an harbour; no marks, in short, of their grandeur and magnificence, and scarce of their power or con-

(a) The last Roman legion quitted Britain in 420, being called away to oppose the Goths and Barbarians, who were then laying waste the empire on the continent.

venience; although Bede, (lib 1.) says they had built 28 cities, beside many villages and country seats: and nothing of their constructing now remains, except an old gateway, supposed to be Roman, at Canterbury; and another at Leicester; and the ruins of Severus's Wall. From which circumstance it may be concluded, that they looked on Britain scarce as a part of the empire, but as unworthy of their improving or adorning; and that they thought it only a conquered land, that would yield a tribute, and send a large revenue to the Imperial Treasury. And, indeed, on comparing this country with most others which they subdued, and held only a few years, instead of near 400, it is amazing to find so few remains of improvement; either in building or opening ports; or cultivating the land; or in establishing any method of employing their new subjects; or in contriving new ways of enriching those people, whom they meant to spoil and plunder. They exhausted, but they did not supply. And perhaps this low idea of Britain was taken up from its insular situation, and its distance from the seat of empire; and what is more, from their making no such use of the ocean and a naval power, as future nations and later statesmen have done; who, to their honour be it said, have contrived to enrich the subject, as the best way of adding to the strength of the sovereign power.

When the Romans quitted Britain, in the year 420, and withdrew the last of their armed force for the defence of Gaul and Italy, Britain was soon after invaded by the Picts, and Scots; and the Saxons, who were accustomed to the sea, made descents and invasions on the coasts towards the North Sea. And in the course of this century, and indeed about the middle of it, all the nations of the north, as if by public consent, broke loose from their cold inhospitable regions; and came down in vast armies to the warm and plentiful regions of the south. Such national migrations were not wholly new, but these in this age far surpassed all former examples. The Scythians, in the early ages of the Persian Empire, had come down from the present Russia, and ravaged all Asia Minor, and held it in subjection for 28 years; but were afterwards vanquished. The Gauls had marched under Brennus about the year 300 of Rome, and seized, plundered, and burnt, that capital. The Cimbri and Teutones had quitted their own country (now called Denmark), and had over-run the greatest part of Gaul; but were defeated with great slaughter by Marius, in the year 102 before Christ. The Helvetians also, a few years after, marched out of Switzerland, in order to seek a more comfortable place of abode; but were stopped and vanquished by Cæsar. And many instances of such

like partial emigrations may be produced ; but the multitudes that poured forth from all parts of the north at this time, quite from Tarry in the east to Norway in the west, were too numerous and too potent to be checked by any opposition ; and, though often defeated, yet settled themselves in almost every country in the south ; and on the ruins of the Roman Empire erected ten distinct sovereignties.

Britain shared in the common calamity, being oppressed by the Picts and Scots as soon as quitted by the Romans : Vortigern, a prince of the west part of Britain, was chosen commander ; and he, finding himself and his countrymen unable to repel the foe from the north, proposed an alliance with the Saxons for their aid and assistance. The Saxon leaders agreed ; and it was stipulated, as the price of their service, that they should settle themselves without molestation in the corner of the country afterwards called Kent ; than which no part of England could be chosen more convenient and suitable for them, considering them as a naval people, and standing in need of every convenience of life on their first settling. Hengist and Horfa landed in Thanet in 449, and the covenant was ratified by Vortigern's taking in marriage Rowina the daughter of Hengist. They assisted him in repelling the Picts and Scots ; and, having sent for more troops from Saxony, they became so powerful, that they forgot their first condition of allies and mercenaries ; and in 454 erected *Kent* into a kingdom. And thus by degrees, their countrymen coming over in great numbers, they next, under Ella, in 491, founded the kingdom of *South Saxons* ; that is, over the next counties to Kent, viz. *Suffex*, and *Surrey*. Then, spreading farther along the south and west coast, they mastered all the country from the last kingdom to the Land's end, and round northward to the Severn ; and bounded these acquisitions by the river Avon and the Thames, and by a line from Bristol to Lechlade. And this *Third* settlement in the year 519, under Cerdic, was denominated the kingdom of the West Saxons. Eight years after, these people got possession of the country adjoining to the Thames northward, and occupied those tracts which were afterwards called East Seax and Middle Seax : and here was erected the *Fourth* kingdom by Erchenwin, in 527.

These people, with a prudent degree of policy, had hitherto settled close to each other ; and doubtless for the purpose of mutual aid. And they had settled as far as possible from that vexatious foe, whom they had beaten out of Britain ; and who would have fallen on the Saxons out of ancient grudge, had the Saxons attempted to settle near them while the enmity was fresh. But now, after 100 years, the Saxons got possession of the country to the north of the Humber ; and occupied

pied all that tract which reached to Caledonia and the Picts Wall ; and which was bounded on the south by the Humber, and then by the Dunn and cross the land to the Mersey. And here was erected the *Fifth* kingdom under Ida in 547. Another tribe of Saxons, called Angles, seated themselves in the tract contiguous to the East Saxons, on the northward ; and in 575, under the conduct of Uffa, established a *Sixth* kingdom, where Suffolk and Norfolk are now situated ; and extended it westward over Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely.

Thus all the coasts of the island were occupied by these invaders, except what was afterwards the county of Lincoln ; and all the inland parts remained in the possession of the Britons. But this country, extending from the Humber to the Thames, and bordering on the limits of the other Saxon settlements, was conquered by Crida in 582 ; and the Britons driven back beyond the Severn : where they ever after defended themselves against any further assaults from these fierce invaders. And this tract was called the Kingdom of Mercia, or, as it were, the Kingdom of the Boundaries, being limited by the bounds of all the other six, and occupying all the vacant ground between them and their enemies the Britons ; for *Mars*, in the language of the Britons, signifies the marches or borders of a country ; and *mark*, or *merc*, is the same also in the Saxon. This kingdom was the largest, if not the most powerful, of the whole Heptarchy ; comprehending all the middle counties of England : but, under the conduct of Peada it acquired great strength and renown. This warlike Prince, during a reign of 50 years, was engaged in continual hostilities with his neighbours ; and slew in battle three kings of the East Angles, and two of the greatest princes who had filled the throne of Northumberland ; but was himself defeated and slain by Oswy, king of Northumberland, in 655.

Now during these conflicts no mention is made of Verulam, nor of any transaction there, although it had been a capital city of the Romans ; except this, that Uter Pendragon, a British prince, had fought the Saxons in a great battle at this place, and received a dangerous wound : and lay a long time confined to his bed (a) : and that he was cured at length by resorting to a well or spring not far distant from the city, at that time reputed salubrious ; and for that reason, and for the cures thereby performed, esteemed holy ; and blessed in a peculiar manner with the favour of Heaven. Brompton, who lived in the time of Richard II. says this. But no earlier historian mentions any other transaction at Verulam, during the contest between the Britons and the Saxons.

(a) In lecto detentus. *M. Paris.*

The Mercians were in continual conflicts with some of the other kingdoms; and, when Offa ascended the throne, in 755, he found them warlike and enterprising. He waged war with the King of Kent, and defeating him, in 774, in a great battle at Otford, near the river Darent in that county, compelled him to be tributary. He gained also a great victory over Kenulph, the King of Wessex, in 778, at Bensington in Oxfordshire, and secured that part of his dominion from any further incursions from that quarter. His successes raised in his breast a temptation of getting the Kingdom of the East Angles; but not by the glory of war, or the achievements of valour; nor by any conduct that could reflect honour on a regal character. He treacherously slew the young King Ethelbert, while he was making suit to his daughter Elfrida; and had been invited to Hereford with all his nobles, in order to celebrate the nuptials. Ethelbert being the last of the royal family, Offa seized the kingdom, and subdued the people by violence. He sought to retrieve his character, and perhaps appease the remorse of his conscience, by paying court to the clergy, by practising all the monkish devotions which in that age of ignorance and superstition were in the greatest esteem. He gave a tenth of all his goods to the Church; presented rich donations to the Cathedral of Hereford; and even made a pilgrimage to Rome. In this place he thought his riches and power would procure him absolution; and he offered the Pope to maintain a college of English youths at Rome, out of his revenues; and to that purpose imposed a tax on every house possessing *Thirty* pence a year, of one penny. Which imposition was levied and sent to Rome, and called *Peter's pence*; and continued to be sent, though afterwards claimed as a right of the Papal See, until the same was abolished, in 1534, by an act of Parliament which abolished all *procurations, delegations, bulls, and dispensations*, from the bishop of Rome. Rapin attributes the tax of Peter's pence (then called Rome'scot) to Ina, the great and illustrious King of Wessex, for the maintenance of a college at Rome which he had founded for English youth; and that Offa only extended this tax over his own kingdom. His journey to Rome was made in 791; and here, in further expiation of his sins, he undertook to build a stately church and monastery to the memory of *St. Alban* and *Honorius*. The same year he set about this work; and died in 794.

Such are the general outlines of the character of Offa. But there are many particulars to be gathered that cast a light on his virtues and vices. And as he became famous for his piety at last, and was the founder of that religious endowment which gives rise to this history, it is necessary to take a nearer view of his qualities and his character.

That

That wicked contrivance of seizing the kingdom of Ethelbert, and putting him to death, in violation not only of all rights of hospitality, but of all laws human and divine, was suggested (says *M. Paris*) by his wife and consort Drida; whom, in abhorrence of her crime, he caused to be thrown headlong into a well, because that was the punishment she had devised against the virtuous Ethelbert. This woman, says the same historian (in the Additions to his great work) had been a near relation to the King of France, and for some heinous crime had been condemned to die; but in compassion to her sex, she was put out to sea in an open boat, without sails or rudder, to live or perish at the mercy of the waves; when at length she was taken up by some English seamen, brought to land, and saved from her horrid doom of perishing in the sea: that Offa was struck with her adventure, contracted a passion, and married her; and that she was henceforth stiled Quendrida, or Queen Drida. But she called herself Petronilla or Parnel; and within the two first years bore sons; the eldest of which was called Egfrid, who succeeded to the throne; and then she bore three daughters, the eldest of which the King gave to Brithric, the King of the West Saxons; the next to Ethelbert, King of the Northumbrians; and the third was solicited by Ethelbert, King of the East Angles, when he was treacherously murdered.

This potent monarch was so formidable to his neighbours in the beginning of his reign, that they confederated together for mutual defence, and intreated the King of France to accede to this alliance, and assist them, if attacked; and *M. Paris* has a letter written by them to that purpose. These were the kings of Kent, of the West Saxons, of the Northumbrians, of the South Saxons, and of the East Angles. In the letter they complain of his pride, and insolence, and crafty devices; and accompany the letter with 1000 pieces of gold. Charles the King of France accepted the present, and sent for answer a letter to Offa, ‘commanding him to desist from disturbing Britain; and ‘forbear to subjugate, by any sort of means, the kings who bordered ‘upon him, and who had lately united themselves to him; that on ‘such an attempt, he would feel Charles, who was formidable to ‘every mortal, hostile to him.’

Offa assembled his nobles and captains; and in a speech accused the kings and Charles of a conspiracy to ruin them and overturn the kingdom of Mercia; ‘but now is the time,’ saith he, ‘when Charles is ‘employed in foreign wars; let us fall on our enemies, and cast them ‘down, never to rise more:’ and instantly marched with his army to
attack

attack the King of the East Angles. A bloody fight ensued, at a place called Feldhurd, and Offa gained the victory.

Charles, or Carloman, at this time died, in Saxony; and his brother, called afterwards Charlemagne, succeeded to his dominions. The British kings renewed their alliance with him, and he answered with high threats to Offa. The consequence was that Offa marched against the King of Kent, and gained the great victory at Otford, wherein the Kentish monarch was slain: and Offa took possession of that kingdom. He then turned his arms against Kenulph, King of the West Saxons, who was securing himself and confederate princes in a great castle at Bensington. In this they defended themselves, and had also a great army in the field. The latter was completely vanquished, and the former in a few days after surrendered; the kings having escaped by favour of the night. They fled with all possible haste to Marmod or Merfyn, the King of Powis, in Wales; and were there sheltered and protected. Offa wrote to this prince, charging the kings with plots, and conspiracies and rebellion, against him their true and legal sovereign (because some of them had before been vanquished by Offa or his ancestors): concluding that Marmod would involve himself in the same calamities, by affording them assistance. The King (Marmod) and his nobles assembled, and having read the letter, they concluded the consultation with this resolution, 'that the powerful King of Wales ought by no means to fear that little king, Offa, who was silly, mad, and possessed by the devil.' *Marmodium potentem, Offam Regulum desipientem et arreptitium minime debere formidare.* And Marmod charged the Ambassadors of Offa with this answer: 'that it would be an act of dishonour and timidity to desert those who were worsted, when he had taken them under his protection, and shewn them compassion; and that, if Offa should presume to attack them, he would arm the whole force of Wales in their defence.'

Offa, in consequence of this, sent troops to take possession of Kent; and by securing the strong posts, preclude all hopes of the King's return. In the mean time he marched against the Potentate of Wales, and the fugitive princes; and having engaged, gave them a cruel and bloody defeat. This happened a few days before the feast of our Lord's nativity; when Marmod proposed the following stratagem to his chiefs and allies: that they should offer a truce to Offa during the succeeding solemnity; when, if the Saxons should be rendered careless, and be put off their guard, he would fall on them by night, and exterminate the whole army of Offa. This treachery was approved: the truce being proposed to Offa, it had his consent; yet neither army made any re-

treat. The King then, for the better caution of each army, and by the consent of both parties, caused a long and deep trench to be dug, with a very high bank thrown up on the side of England, to prevent any sudden incursion of the Britons. And, for the more safe and quiet celebration of divine offices in such a season of solemnity, he built a small church. All which transactions were compleated in 12 days, and those of the shortest; and the trench was named *Offa's Dyke*, and the church called *Offkirke*, even to this day, saith *M. Paris*.

The place of these transactions is not mentioned; but it is probable, nay certain, that it was near the present dyke, and towards the southern end thereof; and it is very likely to be at *Lantwardine* in the north of *Herefordshire*, where two camps are very distinct, with the river *Teme* between them. Here are marks also of the dyke^(a). And this conjecture is favoured by this circumstance, that *Offa* had a palace at *Sutton*, north of *Hereford*, and some remains are there to be seen; and here it was that he contrived the death of *Ethelbert*. Indeed, no such place as *Off-Kirke* is here to be found; yet I cannot think that *Warwick* or *Off-church* near it was the place of these memorable exploits: though it must be confessed that *Warwick* was founded by *Warmand*, the father of the first *Offa*. And probably *Off-church* might be of his founding and building. And *Camden* says, that here was a palace of *Offa*; and it was the place where *Fremund*, a son of *Offa*, was basely murdered.

The stratagem of *Marmod* received every preparation that he thought requisite; and, on the night following Christmas Day, when *Offa* and his army were resigned to sleep and security, these combined kings made a fierce attack. They had employed the men of the country to level the ditch, and thus make an easy passage. The conflict was fatal to the Saxons; they underwent a severe and bloody defeat, were slain in great numbers, and *Offa* retreated; having suffered a loss not to be recovered in a short time. The next year he took post at the same place, and faced the enemy with new and well appointed numbers. The Britons assembled on the same spot, thinking it lucky and

(a) It is visible on *Brachy-hill*, near *Lantwardine*; and from *Knighton* it is continued over part of *Shropshire* into *Montgomeryshire*; passes over the long mountain of *Kefn Digott*, crosses the *Severn* to *Llandrinio Common*. Then it passes the *Vyrnwy* into *Shropshire*, and going near *Oswestry* enters *Denbighshire*; and may be plainly seen from *Rhuabou* to *Plas Power*, near *Wrexham*, and thence to *Basingweok*, near *Holywell*, in *Flintshire*; and was a work of many years; and compleated from the pattern of the rampart which *Offa* begun near *Lantwardine*; and intended to check and repress the incursions of the Britons.

propitious to them; and engaged Offa with great fierceness and numerous bodies of men. A very bloody contest followed; the Britons were routed; the very plain was dyed with blood; and the victor gave orders to slay all the men and infants; and scarcely to shew mercy to the women: an order which, because given by the king in his rage and fury, was executed, with most unheard-of slaughter. Those who had been slain in fight he caused to be buried, together with his own men, in the ditch which the enemy had leveled; and caused all holy offices, and the mass also, to be solemnized over them.

This last exploit happened in the year 775; and he had spent about ten years in these several military expeditions, in which he had at length defeated and worn down all his adversaries. In this year he is said, by *William of Malmfbury*, to have founded a monastery at Bath; which being afterwards demolished by the ravaging Danes, was rebuilt by Elphage, who became bishop of Bath, and then archbishop of Canterbury, about 980.

The King of France, who had written in such menacing terms to Offa, on his entering into alliance with the petty kings of Britain, is called Charles by *M. Paris*; but it is probable that it was Carloman, the brother of Pepin, or else Pepin himself; because the Great Charles, who afterwards became Emperor, was not even King of France, untill the year 771. But whoever was that king, he took no steps to aid and assist his allies. But on the succession of Charles, who was at that time employed in Italy, and had vanquished the Lombards and made captive their King Desiderius, in 774, Offa sent him ambassadors in form, bearing presents of great (a) value and letters requesting his friendship. To these Charles gave answer in terms of civility, and of piety; but without the least mention of the affairs of Britain. And in a few days after, he sent another letter to Offa; saying that Desiderius, the Pagan King of the Lombards, and the generals and chiefs of the vanquished Saxons, with many of their followers, had taken on them the vow of Baptism: styling himself the most potent of the Christian kings in the East; and Offa the most potent of those in the West. And these letters were accompanied with presents and gifts; among which were some statutes made in the provincial synods,

(a) Alcuin, a Benedictine monk, and abbot of Canterbury, was sent to Charlemagne, to settle terms of peace, &c. He was detained by the Emperor, and was in such favour as to be admitted to give him instruction as a preceptor; and he persuaded Charlemagne to found the university of Paris, and that of Pavia; and died abbot of St. Martyn at Tours, in 790.

which

which Charles recommended as containing the rudiments of the Christian faith ; but yet as very proper for the instruction of the British bishops, whom he believed to be *rudes et incompósitos*.

These intimations, aided and encouraged by the general tranquillity of the kingdom, raised thoughts in Offa of making some regulations and alterations in episcopal matters ; particularly the places of the respective sees. Lambert, the archbishop of Canterbury, was thought to have his see too near the dominions of foreign powers ; and it was charged on him in the presence of the King, that he had promised Charles, before the late confederacy of the kings, that, if he would enter Britain with hostility, and come to their aid, he should find free admission into his archbishoprick, with all possible favour and assistance. And another motive with Offa was, an opinion that, where he had triumphed with glory over his enemies, there or near that place would the primacy and archiepiscopal seat be most properly set up, and most devoutly revered. He sent therefore to Pope Adrian proper messengers and presents, requesting that his ‘ holiness would appoint (though contrary to the ancient and approved usage) the Bishop of Litchfield, named Ealdulph, to be an archbishop ; and that all the ‘ provinces of the Mercians might be subject to this prelate.’ The Pope consented ; and Ealdulph received the pall from Rome : but by this division we are not to understand, that the whole power of the archbishop of Canterbury was abolished, and the see removed to Litchfield ; but that a third province was made, and archi-episcopal authority established, at a new place, over a great part of the former province of Canterbury ; for there remained to Lambert, and to his successors, the bishopricks of London, Rochester, Winton, and Shirburn. And, on the death of Ealdulph, Humbert was appointed to succeed him ; who was chaplain to the King and Confessor, was privy to all his counsels and secrets, and was also the *Informator Morum*, or Regulator of his morals. This Archbishop of Lichfield begged the body of the young Prince Ethelbert, and deposited the same with great solemnity in the cathedral of Lichfield ; but it was afterwards carried to Hereford, and there buried, with a church built over it dedicated to his memory.

The King had now attained to old age, and had associated his son as regent with him, and was passing his days in great tranquillity, when he conceived an intention of founding a monastery ; and, in endowing the same, of giving to it the manor of Winslow, where he was then dwelling. It seems as if he had many places of residence, for something of his name appears in many villages and lands, as if

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they had been once belonging to him, if not the places of his abode; such as Offley in Herts, Offington in Berkshire, Oston in Warwickshire, Oston in Suffolk, and High Ofley in Staffordshire.

The monastic life had begun in *Ægypt*; where, about the year 210, a severe persecution raged against all Christians, under the reign of Decius, the Roman Emperor; and where certain pious men, the chief of whom were Paul and Anthony, retired into the deserts, not only for safety, but to enjoy a more quiet life of contemplation and devotion. This example was followed; and great numbers assembled together, even after the persecution had ceased, for the same purposes of religion. And indeed in a hot climate, and a plentiful luxuriant soil, there was something inviting to this kind of peaceful repose beside motives of religion. This kind of life grew into repute, and the fame of its sanctity reached other countries. Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, is said to have carried it into the Greek Church: and there it soon spread; and great institutions were founded and endowed. It passed thence into the Western or Latin Church; and Martin carried it into France.

From France it had passed into Britain: though only two monasteries are mentioned to have been founded there before Augustin was sent over from the Pope, with 40 monks, to the King of Kent, about 596, to instruct him and his people in the Doctrine of Christianity: so unnecessary had it seemed to the Britons to teach and propagate that religion by those means; for the whole nation of Britons had in general received Christianity and established some bishops, and built churches, before Austin's coming, and that by the assiduity of the clergy more than by the labours of the monkish bodies: for the monasteries, though very considerable, being only two (a) in number, could never have been able to spread the Christian doctrine so far as it seems to have gone when the Saxons first invaded and began to make conquests. These two monasteries were *Glastonbury*, and *Banchor* in Cheshire on the river Dee, the foundation and beginning of which last is very early; but it is celebrated for its numbers and magnitude, and its fatal ruin and catastrophe (b).

Banchor contained in it above 2000 monks, and occupied a large city, when Ædelfred, the king of the East Angles, fighting against the

(a) Beside Shirborn in Dorset, founded about 370.

(b) Banchor was founded by Congellus, a Briton by birth, and who became the first abbat about 530, faith Hammer in his Chron. of Ireland, p. 52. Bale says, it was founded by Lucius for Christian philosophers, and continued for 350 years; until Congellus changed it into a convent of monks. It is probable that Lucius founded

the Britons, put to death 1200 monks, for assisting their brethren and countrymen. This happened probably about 613; though some authors place it a few years earlier, and consider Austin as having instigated the king to execute such a degree of cruelty upon them. But he seems to have died some years before. Nothing else is said of this famous place; but, from its situation and dignity, it seems to have been the university as it were, and place of general education for the Britons of those parts; both before the Saxons came, and until its decay and ruin, which followed by degrees from the victory of Ædelfred, and the cruel revenge he had taken.

The other monastery, *Glasstonbury*, was founded about 300 years after Christ, and had grown great and famous; was much augmented and its church rebuilt by King Ina in 725, and maintained a high credit in the time of Alfred, and the same through all succeeding ages until its final downfall and dissolution; at which time it was found to have the largest revenue of any religious foundation in England; the same being 3311l. 7s. 4d. per annum, and therefore was thought the more fit to be dissolved.

At the time of the Saxon invasion, the land was in general obedient to the religion of Christ; and most parts had received the instruction of bishops and priests, settled in a regular method, though not so numerous as in these times. But it is very remarkable how soon and sudden the Saxons became converts to the religion of the conquered. This was generally effected by the persuasion and arguments of the queens, whom the Saxon kings and chiefs married. And when Ethelbert, the king of Kent, received Austin and his retinue as messengers from the Pope, we find he was persuaded to become a Christian by the advice and instruction of his Queen, Bertha, who was the daughter of Lothaire, king of France, and had been instructed in the religion of Christ. And, as the best proof of their sincerity, or as the most meritorious work they could perform, they generally founded monasteries; of which foundations we find about sixteen or seventeen to have been

founded it; and placed it here, in opposition to the Druids, and to spread the doctrine of Christ in that country, where the Druids had held their principal seat. This place had the honour of training up David, the great saint and patron of Wales, and founder of the archi-episcopal see called now by his name; Dubritius also, the founder of Llandaff Cathedral; and Ilutius, the reputed Bishop of Caerleon. Other eminent Britons were educated here long before the Saxons invaded England, as Asaph, Petroc, and Patern; which is the reason why we discover the foundation of the great churches in Wales, to be more ancient than any in England. Warrington's Hist. of Wales.

erected and endowed before the time of Offa's foundation ; and these some of the most considerable ; such as,

1. Rochester, founded in	- - - -	600
2. Canterbury (both at the persuasion of Austin)	- - - -	605
3. Tewkesbury, by Odo and Dodo, Earls of Gloucester,	- - - -	615
4. St. Swithun in Winchester by Kenewulch, King of the West Saxons, who also built the cathedral,	- - - -	634
5. Dorchester in Oxfordshire, with an episcopal see by Cinigilse, King of the West Saxons ; and Oswald, King of the Northumbrians,	- - - -	635
6. Boston by Botolphus,	- - - -	654
7. Peterborough, by Peada, when the Mercians received Christianity,	- - - -	655
8. and 9. Barking and Chertsey, by Erkenwald, Bishop of London,	- - - -	680
10. Malmesbury, by Eleutherius and Aldhelm, Bishops of Winchester,	- - - -	670
11. Gloucester, by Osric, King of the Northumbrians,	- - - -	680
12. Evesham, by Egwine, Bishop of Worcester ; and Kenred, son of Wolphus, King of Mercia,	- - - -	700
13. Bardney in Lincolnshire, by King Oswald,	- - - -	712
14. Croyland by Ethelbald, King of Mercia,	- - - -	716
15. Abingdon, by Cissa, King of the West Saxons,	- - - -	720
16. Minchelney, in Somerset, by a King of the West Saxons,	- - - -	740
17. Winchcomb, in Gloucestershire, by Kenulph, King of the West Saxons, whom Offa vanquished and dethroned,	- - - -	787
18. Glastonbury, <i>refounded</i> by Ina,	- - - -	725

Now, from this list it appears that monastic foundations had their rise chiefly from the time of Austin ; and though we read of the monasteries of Banchor, and of Glastonbury, and Shirburn, prior to his time ; yet they must be considered in a different light from those that followed ; being places indeed of education and Christian instruction ; and containing persons who taught all the sciences and arts then in repute ; and sending forth preachers into places where the inhabitants wanted them : though without any authority from bishops, which at many of these places we do not find any certain traces of. Whereas when Austin came, to convert, as he professed, the Pagan Saxons to Christ, he came to introduce the Christianity of Rome ; with not only its doctrines of Papal supremacy, and many other assumed privileges, and high pretensions ; but also with all the Romish artifices of bearing rule and sway over the people whom they would convert : he came

came with 40 monks, accompanied with the gaudy vestments and all the external apparatus of the Romish worship : but he came, also, furnished with all the learning, and improved science, which Rome afforded ; with a knowledge of the civil laws, and of all the arts which could contribute to civilize men, and teach them more conveniences of living ; and with this view he recommended the founding of monasteries, as being places that contained all useful arts and science, as well as setting forth a most exemplary worship and devotion.

It is remarkable that, in the very year in which Gregory the Pope sent Austin and his monks into England, a great monastery of Benedictines was destroyed by the Lombards ; and this is asserted by the Saxon Chronicle in the year 595 (a). Though the letters of Pope Gregory himself (b) place this catastrophe a few years earlier, yet they say it was the monastery of Monte Cassino in Campania, founded by St. Benedict 60 years before, and enriched with great donations ; and that it was pillaged by Zotto, the first Lombard Duke of Benevento, in Samnium (c). It is farther to be noted, that Gregory the Great was himself a Benedictine monk, and had belonged to the monastery of St. Andrew at Rome.

It is then very probable, that the monastery of Banchor was found by Austin and his monks to be adverse to their plan and institution ; since it is plain that Austin made pretensions to an authority unknown to the British clergy ; and that the latter had never acknowledged a dependence on any foreign pontiff as head. And the advice given by Gregory, as may be seen in his epistle, tends to encourage him to subdue all adversaries and contradiction, till he could firmly settle the Roman power in Britain. And this enmity against the British clergy instigated the King of the East Angles, by the persuasion of Austin, to extirpate Banchor.

(a) This Chron. was compiled at the end of King Stephen's reign. But this event of Cassino is so foreign to English history, that the author by inserting it here means to be understood, that it was connected with the English Church. And the compiler of the Chronicle thought so, when he mentioned it in the course of *English* events, &c. See Gibbon's Edit. of the Sax. Chron.

(b) See the Dial. of Greg. Mag. l. 2. c. 17.

(c) That Mount Cassino had been founded for monks by Benedict, consult the following authors, viz. *Heremperi's Chronicle*, written in the 9th century ; and *Peter the Library-keeper's Treatise of illustrious Personages of Mount Cassino*, written in the 12th century ; and a *Chronicle of Mount Cassino*, by *Leo*, Bishop of Ostia, written also in the 12th century.

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However, the destruction of Cassino happened but a few years before the monks were sent into England. And as this monastery seems to have been the only one in Italy, it is probable that the monks might wish to be placed in a land of more security and safety; or at least be employed where was a richer and more plentiful harvest. And, when they were allowed to settle in England, it is plain that their monastic institutions were blended with episcopacy; that is, that, wherever Austin procured a bishop's see to be erected, there was founded also at the same time a monastery contiguous; where the monks were considered as a standing council, to aid and assist the Bishop in the discharge of his duties, and to provide preachers, and a succession of them, for instructing the villages and country. And it had not yet come to pass that monasteries were founded without a bishop, and independent of his authority: and, in a manner, under the government of an abbot, to set up a separate and distinct interest, and to be labouring for the service of a different master. All which did come to pass in succeeding ages, when the monkish bodies became very numerous, rich, and powerful, and always took part with the Pope as their lawful and only sovereign; and when the clergy, or ministering priesthood, though numerous, were borne down by the monks, and a constant enmity and opposition was maintained between the regulars and seculars; as we shall see in the 9th and 10th centuries.

That the first bishops were Romans is very evident from their names; and that, wherever Austin appointed a bishop, he there established a monastery, appears in the history of every cathedral: or, if the Metropolitan did not establish a monastery together with the bishop, it appears that the new bishops founded one or more monasteries very soon after their appointment.

By the time of Offa, then, about twenty great monasteries had been founded; and about the same number of episcopal sees established: some of the former unconnected with any see; and some of the latter not conjoined or united with any of the former; the general design of both, being to civilize and instruct mankind, and teach the doctrines of divine truth and salvation; but in ways that differed much in future ages, and laid the foundation of great enmity, not only between the different bodies, but also between the superiors to whom they respectively adhered. Offa's zeal prompted him to do what many of his crowned brethren had done before him; and he probably felt such compunctions of mind concerning the death of Elthelbert as made him seek for peace and reconciliation with Heaven: for, though he might not contrive the murder of that prince, and might justly abhor his wife,
who

who was the contriver; yet he shewed no small approbation of the deed when he seized his kingdom. And no doubt his great ecclesiastics, Humbert the Arch-bishop of Litchfield, and Unwona the Bishop of Leicester, would not fail to admonish him of repentance, and encourage him to that work, which was then considered as the most meritorious of all others: and though such was the doctrine of the Church in those ages, and so contrary to what would now be preached to a dying monarch; yet it was a work that certainly comprehended in it a very great store of charity: and if doing good to posterity can avail to procure the pardon of crimes, and reinstate the penitent in the favour of God, this work seemed to be of that kind.

But what made monastic endowments a part of a dying man's charity was the provision therein made for his own particular safety. Here was an institution in which the dying man is interested, and from which he hopes for some private benefit; and that, when his own prayers shall have ceased, the devotion of others may be hired and employed on his behalf: a doctrine this, too flattering to the dying man to be overlooked and neglected; and too gainfull to the monks to be omitted. And, in order to support this business of being intercessors and factors in the way of salvation, the Romish Church had invented purgatory, and all the terrors of the intermediate state.

Such was the doctrine of the times; and such the practice directed to the great, and advised to the devout. And such was the resolution of Offa, when he intended to finish a life of great glory and prosperity; but which had contracted perhaps many pollutions, beside that of murder. To whom then should he dedicate his religious foundation? For the patron of the work was considered as interested in the protection and success of the same. The name of Christ had been used in the dedication of Austin's Monastery at Canterbury; St. Peter's had been applied to the foundation of the cathedral at York; and the pious Ethelbert, king of Kent, had dedicated the cathedral of London to St. Paul; and Sebert, who founded the church and abbey at Westminster, had there dedicated the same to St. Peter.

Offa seems to have been as much perplexed about the place; but in this perplexity he was relieved (says *M. Paris*) by a kind of miraculous intelligence; for, being then at Winslow, and in deep meditation on this subject, he prayed with great earnestness to God, that, 'as he had often delivered him from the dangers and assaults of his enemies, and from the traps and snares of his wife; so he would vouchsafe to grant him further light and information, to enable him to compleat his vow of founding a monastery.' Concluding with an earnest address to his relations and brethren, 'that they would

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‘unanimously and devoutly beseech God, to enable him to bring his ‘intent to effect.’ The history says, that all present retired into the chapel to pray, among whom were Humbert and Unwona, who are called, the *Special Counsellors* of the King; and that the congregation having prayed longer than ordinary, and with the same wishes as the king had expressed, a sudden light from Heaven filled the place with uncommon splendor. This was considered as a token of God’s favour; and the king determined to grant the royal manor of Winslow, where this miracle had happened, to endow his new foundation.

After some time he was at Bath, where, in the rest and silence of night, he seemed to be accosted by an angel, who admonished him to raise out of the earth the body of the first British martyr, Alban, and place his remains in a shrine, with more suitable ornament. This event, now reckoned most propitious, is communicated to Humbert, then at Litchfield; who, taking unto him Unwona Bishop of Leicester, and Ceolwolf Bishop of Lindsey, his suffragans, proceeds immediately, with a great crowd of followers of both sexes, and of all ages, to meet the king, on a certain day by him appointed, at Verulam.

The History saith, that as the king was journeying towards this city, there appeared to him a light shining over the place, and resembling a large torch; that the same was seen by all present at Verulam, and was interpreted as a most favourable omen. And fasting and prayer were used by the prelates and people, beseeching the martyr himself to aid and assist them in the discovery. For the place and memory of Alban had been quite lost, since Germanus, bishop of Auxerre in France, had preached here against the Pelagian Heresy, about 340 years before; and Alban was remembered only in the books of history, and the relations of the aged. So great had been the devastation committed by the Saxons at their coming; when they leveled the churches to the ground, beheaded the prelates and ministers, and reduced the lands and country to a mere desert.

During which overthrow, the church of Alban had been demolished and overturned from the foundations, with the other churches of the country. For a church had been early erected to the memory of the blessed protomartyr of England, and which *Bede* says had been constructed with admirable art, though of timber and plank: and of consequence the sepulchre of Alban, from the time of St. Germanus, and indeed from Alban’s passion, until the general desolation made by the Saxons, had been in good repute, not only for the piety of Alban, but for the miracles there shewn; and had been worshiped by the religious

religious of those times, and honoured by all ; when it was discovered to this invincible monarch by the ministry of an angel. But the exact place of the sepulchre was quite forgotten and unknown. When the king, the clergy, and the people, were assembled, they entered on this search with prayer, fasting, and alms ; and struck the earth every where, with intent to hit the spot of burial ; but the search was not continued long, when a light from Heaven was vouchsafed, to assist the discovery, and a ray of fire stood over the place, like the star that conducted the magi to find the Holy Jesus at Bethlem. The ground was opened ; and in the presence of Offa the body of Alban found, deposited together with some relicks in a coffin of wood, just as Germanus had placed them 344 years before.

If every circumstance here mentioned be true, we need not wonder at that which followed ; which was, as the history says, that all present directly shed tears of holiness and reverential awe ; and, having raised the body from the earth, they conveyed it in a solemn procession to a little chapel, without the walls of Verulam, built formerly by the new converts in honour of this blessed martyr ; and situate on the very spot where the martyr had suffered, and shed his blood in profession of Christ ; and which chapel, by reason of its being small, had escaped the devastation committed by his persecutors.

The king is said to have placed a circle of gold round the bare skull of the deceased, with an inscription to signify his name and title ; and caused the chapel and repository to be enriched with plates of gold and silver ; and to be decorated with pictures, tapestry, and other ornaments ; until a more noble edifice could be erected. This transaction happened 507 years after the suffering of Alban, 344 after the invasion of the Saxons, and on the first day of August, in the 36th year of Offa's reign, that is, 791 of Christ.

It is very probably that, although this church had been demolished by the invaders near 300 years before, yet the fame of Alban had not totally perished ; since this chapel, called afterward St. German's chapel, would tend in some degree to preserve a remembrance of him. And the name of his master and instructor, Amphibalus, had been held in such high estimation, that the founders of the episcopal and monastic church at Winchester, viz. Constant the Bishop, and Deodatus the Abbot, had dedicated the same to the honour and memory of Amphibalus in 309 : yet, as the following ages of the Christian Church experienced woeful changes, and overthrows, and desolations ; it is likely that the memory of Alban (a) lived only in Offa's time, in the report and tradition of old people.

(a) At Cambodunum, in Yorkshire, Paulinus had dedicated a church to Alban.

The discovery of the martyr's body, and the solemnity that followed, is said by *M. Paris* to have been accompanied with numberless miracles; such, he describes, as were once performed by the Saviour of the World. And the historian speaks in a way that shews he thought the simple age of Offa to have been as credulous and as full of craft as that of himself 500 years after: for he speaks of miracles as if they were the common occurrences of every day; and not as the extraordinary operations of the Almighty, wrought on great occasions, and for great purposes.

The king thought proper to call together his nobles, prelates, and chief personages, to take counsel on the further execution of his pious design. And it was then determined, that the King should in person go to Rome, to solicit leave of the Pope, and procure the desired privileges to his foundation. The king proceeded; and went in full intention to make his endowment as far transcend all other monasteries as St. Alban had surpassed all other martyrs. The Pope, with great commendations of the king's zeal and piety, grants all his requests; and Offa, in return, granted, for the use of the English school at Rome, that Peter-pence, or one penny per family, should be collected throughout his dominions. And having made confession to the Pope of all his crimes, and received a conditional absolution, he departed with a devout benediction.

And, indeed, whatever invectives may be thrown out against the Church of Rome, and the incroachments of its pontiffs, it must be confessed to have been a benefit to mankind in general, that there was a power on earth that could controul the power of kings, and restrain their frequent enormities. And it might be said, in apology for Popery, that, however false may be some of its doctrines, and inconsistent with the revealed word of God; yet that they were contrived and calculated, especially those that relate to futurity, to terrify and reclaim the great and mighty of this world. They argue that this rank of men were in those times profligate and violent, and above all human laws; and seem to evince, that as mankind in general stood in need of miracles to alarm and awaken their attention, so did the high and mighty need the terrors of Hell, rather than the persuasive voice of reason or religion, to restrain their impieties. And, amongst those men, who were the sole possessors of all learning and ingenuity, and whose duty it was to rule others by instruction and counsel, it cannot be wondered, that they should borrow aid and help from every circumstance that seemed to favour their plan.

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The king, on his return, assembled the nobles and prelates at Verulam; and took further steps towards accomplishing his design: resolving to bestow on Alban very ample possessions; in consideration that it was a work intended for alms and hospitality, and that the situation being on the great road called Watling-street, it would be resorted to by many passengers, both going from the north and from London; and deeming it an act of piety to relieve and accommodate all travellers. Having made a selection of persons out of other religious houses, and especially from that of Bec in Normandy, proper for monks, he placed over them as abbot and superior, one *Willegod*; a man who had been present at the finding of the body, and had been witness of the miraculous flame; and who had devoted himself to a religious life: he was also related to the king, and born of a noble family. Having made choice also of a proper place, he began the building; in great solemnity laying with his own hand the first stone, and recommending, in the most devout prayer, the protection of this house 'to thee, O Jesus! and to thee, O Martyr Alban! and to thee, O Willegod! with maledictions on all who should disturb it, and eternal blessings on those who should be its benefactors.' He proceeded in the work, furnishing Willegod with money, and making him the director and ruler; yet he continued to live here the rest of his life, and conducted the building at his own expence, performing the part of surveyor and guardian of the whole; saving only, that he procured leave to use and apply toward this work all the Peter-pence due and collected in the then province of Hertford.

Willegod the
1st abbot.

Let us now take a view of Verulam down to the period we treat of. During the time of the Britons, Verulam, like all their other towns, was a naked defenceless place, without any works for its protection beside the woods and the great pool, the head of which, or the bank which was raised across the valley in order to stop the waters, was the only work now visible of British industry or skill. And as they dwelt together in towns only during the winter, this was reduced almost to a desert in the summer months. When the Romans became settled here, and had recovered, under Suetonius, Paulinus, or Agricola, they inclosed this place with walls, and built gates, and laid out the ground plot in regular streets; and, by the remains of those walls which are still visible, the work is manifestly Roman, and constructed in that sort or fashion, which their writers describe by the *Isodrome*, that is, in equal or even courses, to distinguish it from the more rude and hasty works, where courses were not observed. And the materials, being the Roman tile made on the

Willeged the
111 abbot.

spot, and the flints all faced and laid with great art and skill, and the nature of the cement, being made of quick lime and sharp gravel or very coarse sand, is a sure argument that the builders were no other than the Romans, who constructed works of this sort in other places.

The town was probably built throughout of the same materials, and was bounded on the east and west, and these extremities joined on the south, by a strong wall and a deep ditch; and on the north the boundary and defence was the great lake. The compass of land included could not be less than 100 acres. And the great lake or pool occupied at least 20 more. The entrance on the south-east was at a corner of the city, but was secured with a double ditch and rampart, and probably two gates. The place of the streets is very uncertain at this day, except that the way from St. Michael's bridge, to the ruins on the south-side, was a main street; and but a few years since the foundations of that south gate were dug up. Another street passed along the whole length of the city, from the south-east corner to the site where now stands the church, and thence to Gorham-block. For the ancient and most frequented road from this new town (when it rose up) to Redburne, was on the north side of the river.

Verulam was, no doubt, a handsome and convenient town, so long as the Romans bore sway in this country; but when they quitted, about 450, and withdrew their military force, the Romans who remained, though very numerous, were not able, because untaught, to defend the country from the Picts and Scots, and then from the invading Saxons. And it is highly probable that the Scots and Picts, if they came so far into England, or some of the Saxons, gave an utter overthrow to this city; for, being allured by the hopes of plunder, they would not overlook a large and well-frequented city. No memorials of such an event do remain; but, if Brumpton's account be true, that Uter Pendragon had a great battle with the Saxons at this place, it may well be conjectured, that, whatever was the event of that day, they who conquered in other places, and finally subdued all their British adversaries, did succeed here also, and vanquish, spoil, and lay waste this city: and in this conflict the inhabitants were either massacred, or with other Britons fled into Wales. And this must have happened between 450 and 700 after Christ (a).

And here it will not be amiss to note the extent of Offa's dominions, and the state of episcopacy therein at this time. He reigned then over as many provinces, as made afterwards (when Alfred divided the kingdom) twenty three shires; viz. that of Hereford, where the

(a) See Matt. Westminster, p. 138.

bishop held his see and place of residence; those of Worcester and Gloucester, the bishop of which had his see in Worcester; the provinces of Warwick, Chester, Stafford, Salop, and Derby, the bishop of which had his see at Lichfield; the province of Lincoln, whose bishop had his see at Lindsey; the provinces of Northampton, Oxford, Buckingham, Bedford, Huntingdon, Cambridge, and the western half of Hertfordshire, the bishop of which had his see at Dorchester; over the province of Essex and Middlesex, and the other half of Hertfordshire, the bishop of which had his see in London; also in Norfolk and Suffolk, whose bishops were, one at Elmham, and the other at Dunwich: he reigned also over Nottingham, which was subject to the archbishop of York; and over Leicester, whose bishop had his see in that city. Most of which bishopricks, it is probable, had been instituted by Theodore, the learned archbishop, who came to Canterbury in 668, and who had bred up Bede, John of Beverley, Alcuin, and Tobias Bishop of Rochester.

Willegod the
1st abbot.

When Offa, of immortal memory, had nearly compleated all the offices and necessary buildings, which within the 4th year he had effected, and having placed therein about 100 monks of the regular orders, he retired to his palace at Offley, and there closed the scene of his life. His body was carried to Bedford, and deposited in a royal manner in some chapel without the town, on the banks of the Ouse. But in the time of *M. Paris* there were no remains of monument, sepulchre, or chapel; and the tradition was, the violence of the floods had washed all away. No care had ever been taken by the monks or abbot to preserve the remains of so great a king, and so liberal a benefactor. And posterity have been left to bemoan the fate of royal remains; to charge the monks with great ingratitude, neglect, and folly; and to blame his family and relations for not giving him more honourable interment, and for paying no suitable regard to his piety and zeal.

The endowment made by Offa was his manor and palace of Winslow, about twenty miles distant from the monastery, and as many miles in circumference; saith my author, as the 'writings of the king now preserved in this church can testify:' and for which estate he had procured this privilege, that while all other lands and families were subject to the tax of Peter-pence, this alone was ever exempt.

At the death of Offa, which happened in 794, Willegod was in compleat possession of his new government and dignity, and had established the rule of his house. The monks had been elected out of several other houses; and were now under the vow and obligation of

Eadric the 2d
abbot.

St. Benedict's order ; which had been the order introduced by Austin, and was that which Benedict himself had established at Cassinam. The vow of the order was this : to live in the observance of the most rigid chastity, to have no possessions of their own, and to pay obedience to their superior or abbot. And their dress was a long black tunic or close gown, reaching to their heels, loose and ungirded ; beneath they wore a white close waistcoat of woollen, and a hair shirt ; for a covering of the head, which was shaved on the greatest part of the crown, so as to exhibit an outer circle of hair, there was a cowl hanging back on the shoulders ; and their feet and legs covered with a boot. And in their diet they were compelled to abstain from all flesh, except when they began to grow sick.

Willegod ruled this abbey no longer than two months after the death of Offa his beloved master ; for, though the son of Offa, named Egfrid, succeeded, and had given in the first year of his reign no less than five manors to the abbey ; yet he refused the request of Willegod and the monks, to have his father interred in this place of royal foundation : and this disappointment, and seeming ingratitude in the young monarch, caused such an affliction in Willegod as to hasten his death.

If it be asked who this Alban was, to whose memory a royal and ample foundation should be erected, it is to be lamented that no account has been left of him, more than that he was an eminent martyr for the Christian faith in the persecution set on foot about 303, and called the Diocletian persecution, near 500 years before Offa founded the monastery. His name imports him to have been a Roman ; but we know not whether a man in high military command, or a great civil ruler, or in what rank of life he sustained so high a character of piety, &c. But as he was a Roman, and was put to death by Imperial authority from Rome, it may be doubted whether his adherence to the Christian faith was the only crime laid to his charge ; and whether there might not be some civil offence urged against him (a) ; though certainly his piety only was the virtue which excited the veneration of Germanus, and afterwards of Offa. ‘ This persecution,’ says Eusebius (b), ‘ raged for ten years with merciless fury throughout Britain ; and many other illustrious persons fell in testimony of the faith ; such as Aaron of Exeter, and others, named by the above author (c).’

The second abbot was *Eadric*, chosen out of the body of monks, as Offa had strictly charged in the rules he had given ; and a relation of the royal family.

(a) For sheltering and protecting the persecuted, says *Gildas*.

(b) Eccl. Hist. 8. 13.

(c) See Lactantius, Instit. Div. 5. 13.

The *third* abbot was *Vulfig*, or *Ulf*, related also to the royal family of Offa; though Alfred was now the general monarch, not of Mercia, but of all England. This abbot departed far from the strict sobriety of his rank and office; and, though chosen out of the body, soon became highly elevated with worldly pride; for he changed not only the form and shape, but the colour also of his garments; used vestments of silk, and walked with a long train. Instead of serious study at home, he pursued the sports of the field, and went out a hunting; grew dainty in his meat and drink, and courted the favour of the great and powerful more than the silent favour of God. Another great enormity he practised, which was to invite crowds of noble ladies to his table; and thereby he injured not only his own fame, but the sobriety also of his brethren. He alienated and wasted the substance of their treasury, and disposed of the choice vessels which Offa had left them, and the rich cloaks or palls, with the valuable collars and chains. And his female relations he united in marriage to the nobles and great men; enriching them at the expence of the abbey. *M. Paris* says, this carnal abbot, having satiated himself with the fat of the public wealth, excited not only the vengeance of God, but the hatred and curse of the whole convent. And, having died in a fit of intemperate drinking, the grave men of the abbey rose in arms against those who had acquired their riches, and obtained a restitution of a great part; and left the possessors in indigence and misery.

*Vulfig the 3d
abbot.*

The *fourth* abbot was *Vulnoth*. He strove with great diligence for three or four years to correct the errors of his predecessor; but at length became a worse man. A certain number of nuns, almost approaching to secular, who lived in *Vulfig's* time too nigh the church, he removed further, and fixed in one dwelling; setting bounds to their walks; and limiting the hours and place of their meals, their devotions, and sleep; and of their silence, which was intended for private prayer. Their business was to collect the alms, and attend the early morning prayer in the great church. And, for the better preservation of their health, they were ordered to abstain from all diet of flesh.

*Vulnoth the
4th abbot.*

But, in process of time, these good beginnings of reform were polluted with a most shameful end; for he again altered the original shape and colour of the monkish frock and the cowl, quitted the monastic habit, kept dogs and birds for the purposes of hunting, and put on the manners and dress of a hunter. And by this licentious course he wasted the treasures of the church, and disgraced the fame of religion.

This abbot, *Vulnoth*, having governed his church 11 years, was struck with a palsy; and turning this temporal punishment to a spiritual

Ædfrid the 5th abbot. tual amendment, he gave proofs of a sincere repentance. Seeming to himself as chastized by the scourge of Heaven, he changed his life to such a degree of sanctity as to reform many others by his example, and to finish his life in felicity.

In the time of this abbot; and in the reign of Ethelstan, about 930, the Danes were committing great excesses over all England: and a party of them hearing the fame of Alban, the first martyr of Britain, they came to this abbey, broke open the tomb, seized his bones, and carried some of them off into their own country, and there deposited them in a costly shrine, built for that purpose in a house of the black monks; hoping they would be worshipped and adored with the like veneration in Denmark as they had been in England.

The *fifth* abbot was *Ædfrid*. This man was descended from some of the Saxon nobles; and though respectable for the elegance and deportment of his person, he was in his conduct and actions exceeding vain and despicable. On his election from being prior of the abbey to the rank of abbot, he threw aside all the severe behaviour of the cloister, and wasted the days of his life in useless ease and idle festivity. Attentive to the business of the treasury, he seldom appeared in the cloister, and never condescended to shew himself in the choir. In the defence of the church's possessions he was warm and earnest; but in new acquisitions very pusillanimous; and was noted only for obtaining a cup, much to be admired for its workmanship and the matter; and dedicated the same to St. Alban, for holding the wafer, which, when consecrated, they called the *Lord's Body*.

In this abbot's time, which was in the reign of Edmund the good, and by permission of the abbot, but without any assistance from him, a chapel was built in honour of St. German, by Ulpho the prior of this abbey, and a man of admired sanctity. For it is to be understood, that Germanus, after he had raised from the earth the bones of Alban, had made some abode at this place, and had dwelt in a small habitation behind the wall of Verulam, and contiguous to the pool; in which place his buildings now lay in utter ruin, scarcely exhibiting any marks of their former master. Ulpho then constructed this chapel on the same spot to the memory of Germanus, and here lived a solitary life, cultivating a small garden, and living by the herbs and plants. And this same abbot, after the death of Ulpho, retired to the same place, and having laid down his pastoral care, and resigned his honour and dignity, passed the rest of his days in a pious solitude. Some remains of this chapel are to be seen in Dr. Stukeley's View of Verulam; but the same has been utterly demolished within the last sixty years.

The

The *sixth* abbot was *Ulfinus*. This man, being of a pious and orderly life, became conspicuous in all spiritual and temporal concerns. By this time something of a village was gathered about the new church and abbey; and the abbot invited and encouraged the inhabitants of the adjacent parts to build and settle there; and for that purpose gave them materials and money; and moreover laid out and embellished a place for a market. He also constructed a church at each entrance into this future town; and dedicated that on the north to St. Peter, that on the south to St. Stephen, and another on the west to St. Michael; each of them at the confluence of the roads and ways; and intended not so much for the *ornament* as for the *utility* of the village, and the edification of the people. This was in the reign of Edred, and about 948.

Ulfinus the
6th abbot.

This abbot testified great regard to the memory of his predecessor, and caused his funeral obsequies to be solemnized with great splendor. The house also, in which he had lived and died, *Ulf* treated with great reverence; insomuch that he often caused mass to be celebrated there. And not far from it he caused a chapel or oratory to be built to the honour of the Holy Mary Magdalene.

He was succeeded by *Ælfric* the 1st of that name. This abbot purchased, at the price of the cup abovementioned, from the King, probably Edgar, the great fishpool; for it was a fishery belonging to the king, whose house or palace was that now called Kingsbury: and this pool, by reason of its vicinity to the abbey, and the pride of the royal servants, had been hurtful and troublesome to the religious body. *Ælfric*, therefore, in order to prevent the like inconvenience, cut a passage through the head which banked up the waters, and, draining them off, turned it all into dry land; preserving only a small pool for the use of the abbey. And *M. Paris*, who wrote about 1240, says, 'to this day are to be seen the banks and shores of the great lake, adjoining to the way which leads westward, and is called fishpool street. The rest of the drained land was turned into gardens.'

Ælfric the 7th
abbot.

This *Ælfric* was in great repute for his learning; was the author of a Saxon grammar; and of many epistles and sermons, some books of which are still extant in the libraries belonging to the cathedrals of Worcester and of Exeter. That at Exeter is written in Latin and in Saxon; the other wholly in Saxon, and seems a translation from the Latin. And these epistles and sermons were used by the bishops in their cathedrals.

Ælfric had been bred up, as he says himself, in the schools of Ethelwold, the bishop of Winchester; the same who, in conjunction with

F

Dunstan,

Ealdred the
8th abbot.

Dunstan the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Oswald Bishop of Worcester, expelled from all the cathedrals the married priests, and encouraged monks to supply their places. Ælfric was abbot also of Malmesbury in Edgar's time: and what is remarkable is this, that in his epistles, and in one of his sermons for Easter Day, his doctrine concerning the Eucharist is wholly such as the Reformers took up in the Church of England under Elizabeth and Edward; that is, against the bodily presence and transubstantiation; and perfectly the same as Berengarius taught in the time of William the Conqueror, and Pope Gregory VII. called Hildebrand; making the sacraments a memorial only, and to be taken spiritually and typically. 'Certainly,' he says, 'this housel (host), which we do now hallow at God's altar, is a remembrance of Christ's body, which he offered for us, and of his blood, which he shed for us. Once suffered Christ by himself: yet his suffering is daily renewed at the mass, through mystery of the holy housel.' And in his Epistle to Wulfstan, Bishop of Shirburn, are these words, as may be seen in the original still preserved in Exeter cathedral: "and yet that living bread is not so bodily: not the self same body that Christ suffered in; nor is the holy wine the Saviour's blood which was shed for us in bodily reality, but in ghostly understanding." In the Latin copy of this epistle at Worcester, sent to Oswald the bishop, those words are erased.

Ælfric, or, as he is generally written, Ælfric, translated also the Bible, or many books of it, as may be learned from his tracts; which were printed by that great lover of antiquity *William L'Isle*, Esq. of Wilburgham, in 1623. And some books of the said Bible Translation were printed by *Dr. Hickes*, at Oxford, in 1698. Ælfric was abbot in 950; and brother to Leofric, who was elected to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury.

Ælfric was succeeded by *Ealdred* the eighth abbot: This man was wholly intent on searching the remains of the ancient city, in digging out the old foundations and arches, and levelling the uneven places; with a view not only to clear that place of thieves and robbers, who lived there in concealment; but also to provide all kind of materials for building; having determined to pull down the present fabrick, which had served for a church, and in due time build it quite new. His workmen, in digging deep into the earth, were said to find planks of oak with nails, and smeared over with pitch; to have found also very ancient anchors, marine shells, and shell fish. And from these discoveries they gave names to places about the ancient pool,

as

as Oyſterhill, Shelford, Anchorpool, and Fiſhpool. And this abbot ^{Eadmer the 9th abbot.} departed without any other deed worthy to be recorded of him.

The next in ſucceſſion was *Eadmer*, a man of great piety, gentleneſs, and learning. He was employed alſo in further providing, not in waſting the materials deſigned for the new church : and amafſed a vaſt quantity of the Roman tile, ſtone, and timber. His workmen, in ſearching the ruins of the old city, overturned the foundations of a large palace, and found concealed in a wall a parcel of books and rolls : one among the reſt with an inſcription and title that glistened with letters of gold. It was encompassed or bound with boards of oak, and filken bands ; which ſtill preſerved their ſtrength and their beauty. But, alas ! they found themſelves quite unable to read this book : and though the curioſity of all perſons was great to be informed of its contents, yet no perſon could be found able to read it ; until, after a long ſearch, they found a poor decrepit old man, a prieſt, who was verſed in languages, and, who reported it to be written in the language that had uſed to be ſpoken by the ancient inhabitants of Werlamceafre ; for ſo the Saxons called Verulam. Having committed the other books to the flames, becauſe they treated of the idols and worſhip of Heathens ; this, which contained a hiſtory of the life and ſufferings of Alban, was laid up, and uſed to be read in the monastery with great devotion, ſays *M. Paris*, even to this day. Eadmer cauſed it to be tranſlated into Latin, in order to make the ſubject more known and underſtood ; and as ſoon as the Latin tranſlation was finiſhed, the original in the Britiſh tongue fell to duſt and aſhes.

Now, this ſtory hath ſo much the air of a monkish impoſture, and of that affected reverence which they would draw to their founders, that I have written it at length, as a juſt ſpecimen of that art which monks uſed, to ſanctify falſehood or novelty ; and often downright fraud and deception. For it is probable that *Ælfric* the 2d compoſed this little hiſtory in Latin ; becauſe in Biſhop Oſmund's *Breviary*, or *Maſs Book*, there is an office compoſed by *Ælfric*, in honour of Alban.

Eadmer diſcovered, among the ruins of Verulam, ſeveral ſlabs of ſtone, beſide tiles and columns, and other materials proper for building. They dug up fundry veſſels of earth and of glaſs, uſed formerly as pitchers and cups : they found veſſels of glaſs containing the aſhes of the dead : temples alſo half ruined were diſcovered, with altars and idols, and divers ſorts of coins and money formerly in uſe. All of which this pious abbot, having more zeal than love of antiquity, cauſed to be ſtamped to duſt and deſtroyed. He was ſucceeded by

Leofric the
10th abbot.

Leofric the tenth abbot. This man was son of the Earl of Kent, and of great personal beauty; but still more excellent for his faith and his morals. His merits and fame were so great and conspicuous, that he was elected by the monks of Canterbury to be the archbishop and head of the church. But he consented not, and refused this dignity; alledging his brother *Ælfric*, whom he had persuaded to write the short history of St. Alban, to be more worthy of it. A great famine prevailed in his time over all parts of England; and, to alleviate the distresses of the poor during this exigence, he spent all the treasure which had been collecting for the future building. And, to raise more money for this charitable purpose, he sold the materials which had been gathered, with all the columns or pillars, and stone pavements preserved out of the old city; and also disposed of all the gold and silver vessels; as well those that had been destined to the use and ornament of his table, as for that of the church service: reserving only certain precious stones, for which he could find no purchaser, and several curious engraved stones, called even at that day Cameo's. All which were intended for the embellishment of the shrine, when the new church should be built.

In excuse for this waste, or, as some called it, extravagance, he said, 'that the faithful in Christ, especially if they were poor, constituted the church and temple of God; and was indeed that real and true church, which it was his duty to build up and preserve. And that it was the best instance of pure and undefiled religion to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction.' However, this liberality caused great dissensions in the monastery, which were at length composed and moderated, not so much by the intreaties of this charitable man, as by the fears of the civil power. For the abbot being of high descent, and related to many of the nobles, found himself well supported in his contests concerning the property and rights of his abbey: and his notions of high birth were such, that he never would admit into the profession of a monk any person, unless of famous descent, or at least legitimate: saying, 'that the ignoble and the illegitimate, especially if without any fame, or given to change, were ever prone to all enormities.' This man at length consented to be exalted to the see of Canterbury, and, in Godwin's catalogue, is mentioned by the name of Alaricius by the Latin authors, and died in 1006, in the reign of Ethelred, having sat there 13 years.

He was succeeded in the abbacy by his own brother *Ælfric*, the 2d of that name; who possessed the same generosity, and the like accomplishments

plishments both of body and mind; and was elegantly skilled in sacred learning. When he entered on his office of abbot, a brother of the house, named Leofftan, paid him the following compliment, which is a specimen of their learning, and of their mechanical poetry, rather than of their ingenuity and real good taste:

Fac superes tu qui super es successor honoris.
Degener es, si degeneres a laude prioris.

Now this Ælfric, saith *M. Paris* expressly, was the composer of a life of Alban, written while he was Chantor of the abbey, and set to music; and, by the authority of his brother the archbishop, the same was published in many parts of England, and a day appointed every week, viz. Thursday, for the celebration of the martyr. This man, being of high birth and good education, was advanced, while a secular, to be chancellor to King Ethelred. And when in this high station he purchased of the king (and, when abbot, obtained a confirmation of the said deed from Ethelred) certain lands called Kingsbury; containing the royal mansion, together with the stews, warrens, and woods belonging to the same. Which mansion, because it had often given offence and trouble to the monastery, Alfric caused to be demolished, and levelled with the ground; except one small tower nearer to the monastery, which the King, at this time Canute, would not permit to be thrown down; in order that some footsteps of royalty might appear; 'and which endures,' says *M. Paris*, 'to this day, and bears his name;' and probably is the old tower which stands at this time by the side of the market, and is a sort of clockhouse.

This abbot lived through the reigns of Canute, Harold, and Hardicanute; and when King Edward, called afterward the Confessor, succeeded in 1041. In this reign the Danes renewed their invasions, and made dreadful havock in many parts where they marched, or where they chose to settle and establish themselves. Alfric, therefore, fearing their ravages and robberies; caused the most valuable effects of the monastery, and, what was more esteemed than all other goods, the bones of St. Alban, and the shrine enclosing the same, to be concealed in a secret wall, viz. close under the altar of St. Nicholas; with the privacy of some few only of the brothers. But he sent an open message to the abbot and monks of Ely, requesting, that, as their place was well secured by waters and marshes from the incursions and dangers of robbers, they would be pleased to receive into the convent of Ely the relics of St. Alban;
and

Leofstan the
12th abbot.

and keep them safe untill the same should be demanded, when peace and quiet should be re-established. The monks of Ely consented; and Ælfric sent them the remains or relicks of some ordinary monk, inclosed in a very rich chest. He sent also many ornaments of his church; and, to give it a better appearance of truth, he added a very rough shagged old coat; with an insinuation and caution that this was the very coat that was usually worn by Amphibalus (a) the master of Alban.

The Danes were disappointed in this projected invasion, by the loss of their king, who, in going on board, fell into the sea and was drowned; and in less than a year the alarm was over, and England returned to peace and security. The Albanians then demanded the relicks: the Elyeians refused; and, sending back a saucy answer, determined to keep them: the true owners pleaded the sanctity of the engagement; and threatened to inform not only the king, but the Pope also, of their breach both of faith and of religion. The Elyeians then began to entertain a fear; and, disagreeing, a great schism happened among them. The major part, however, thought the bones of Alban to be valuable; and as much so to them as to their old masters; and resolved to keep them. And, to save appearances, they contrived to open the bottom of the chest, drew out the bones there contained, and placed others of an ordinary sort in their room; and thus sent back the chest and its sacred contents. The Albanians deposited the same in a wooden chest, which was over the altar of St. Oswin (b), in which, corporeal remains used to be reserved: and in which very chest the martyr Alban had laid untill he was immured.

Ælfric now drew the authentic relicks out of the wall, and placed them with the shrine in the midst of the church. Edward the Confessor being informed of this fraud committed by the monks of Ely, expressed great anger; but left them in possession of their imaginary relicks.

Ælfric was succeeded by *Leofstan*, who had composed the distich above recited. He had been a familiar friend with Edward the King; confessor and counsellor to him and his Queen Editha, who was the daughter of Earl Goodwin. The surname of this abbot was Plumstan: and his chief attention was employed in rendering the ways leading to this town safe and commodious for merchants and travellers. The way to London, called Watling Street and the Royal Way, as well as all

(a) See farther in the life of Symond the 19th abbot.

(b) See its place in the plate. Oswin was in 644 a pious king of Northumberland, and basely murdered. But his piety raised churches and altars to his memory in the north; and from thence his fame reached this place.

parts of the Chiltern, being covered with thick woods and groves, was become the refuge of divers sorts of wild beasts, such as wolves, wild boars, stags, and wild bulls; and was also a harbour for thieves and robbers, outlaws and fugitives; to the great annoyance and dangers of all passangers. On which Leofstan granted the manor of Flamstead to a very valiant knight named Thurnot, and to his two fellow soldiers; for which Thurnot gave privately to the abbot five ounces of gold, a very beautifull palfrey or nag, for his own riding, and a very choice greyhound; on condition that Thurnot should guard and defend by himself and his retinue all the said highway, and all the western parts of the Chiltern (a), and that he should be answerable for any losses that might happen therein by his neglect; and in case any general war should arise in the kingdom, that Thurnot should strenuously guard and protect the church of St. Alban.

Leofstan the
12th abbot.

These conditions were punctually complied with and fulfilled by Thurnot and his companions, until the time of the Conqueror, when that manor was taken from them because they disdained being subject to the Normans. And frequent skirmishes happened between these defenders and the invaders, and several houses were burnt, and many on both sides slain; when at length, the Normans gaining strength, and their conquest being established, the said manor was given to a follower of William, named Roger de Thoni, who wished to deprive the monastery of their right; but fulfilled with great diligence the above service and engagement.

This abbot conferred some ornaments on his church; and left his monastery very affluent and abundant. But, as a great revolution is soon to be experienced, it is proper to look back and shew what acquisitions the monks possessed, and from whose benevolent and pious endowments the same had arisen.

Beside the palace, buildings, lands, and manor of Winflow, the original gift of the founder; his son Ægfrid, in the first year of his reign, 795, conferred on the abbey five manors, in a place called Pynesfeld; that is, the manor so called, and situate in Rickmansworth, and other manors in the same parish.

In the reign of Edmund Ironside, and Edward the Confessor, Ælfric purchased of the king, for 5 marks, an estate called Oxonage and Adulfinton: and for fifty pounds he bought Norton, Upton, and Becces Wortham, in perpetual right and inheritance. At what time they became possessed of Flamstead I cannot find; but the present

(a) The chalkey country near this town was so called.

Leofftan the abbot, Leofftan, by means of his connection and interest at court with the king and queen, obtained Studham, Redburn, Langley, Grenebury, and Thwangton. The first was probably by grant or legacy from one Osfulph, and his wife Adilitha; and the other four were from Egelwin and his wife Wineflæd; and probably by legacy; because they were accompanied with other rents, gifts, and ornaments.

At the time when the great survey was made and entered in the book called Domesday (a) the possessions of the abbey in this county there *recorded* are these following, where we may note what their estates were at this period, and in the time of Paul, the 14th abbot, when the survey was taken.

THE LAND OF ST. ALBAN, IN THE HUNDRED OF ALBANESTON (b).

In Henamested (Hempsted) were 20 hides; the abbot was rated for so much: two mills of 20s. each rent; pasture, or common for cattle; wood for 1400 hogs: The whole value 22l. 10s.; and in the time of Edward the Confessor, 25l. This manor lies in the lordship of the church of St. Alban.

The abbot holds in Scenlai, (Shenley), and is taxed for 6 hides; pasture or common for cattle; and wood for 400 hogs: the value in the whole is 12l. and in time of Edward 6l. This manor lies in the lordship of the church of St. Alban.

The abbot holds Walden, and is assessed for 10 hides. The land is 14 carucates; in domain three hides, 2 mills of 15s. rent; meadow, half a carucate; pasture for cattle; a grove or wood for hedges and for houses: the value 18l. 10s. and in time of Edward, 20l. 10s.

The abbot holds Sandridge for 10 hides. The land is 13 carucates. In domain 3 hides; 1 mill of 10s. rent; pasture for cattle; a wood for 300 hogs: value 18l.

The town of St. Alban is assessed at 10 hides. The land is 16 carucates; in domain 3 hides. Here are 46 householders. From the toll and other rents, 11l. 13s. is raised; 3 mills of 40s. rent: value 20l. a year; a wood for 1000 hogs. In this town are 12 cottagers; 1 inclosure (c), or park, for beasts of the forest; and one fish-pool. The said householders possess half an hide of land.

(a) Domesday book is a survey of all the lands and possessions granted by the Conqueror, and then held by his Norman chiefs; and by no means a survey of *all* the lands comprehended in his new kingdom. The first case was necessary for William, in order to enable him to establish his knights fees, institute his feudal system, and guard his new acquisition. See Ingulphus.

(b) Hundreds were formed in the time of King Alfred. But how and when Hempsted came into Dacorum is not known.

(c) Round Kingsbury.

IN BRODEWATER HUNDRED.

Leofstan the
12th abbot.

Codicote and Oxewiche. These two manors were separate and distinct in the time of Edward; but now make one, and contain 8 hides; with pasture for cattle, and a wood for 200 hogs: the value 6l. and in time of Edward 12l. a year. Here did Alwin hold of the abbot 13 hides, not separable from the church.

The abbot holds Norton, for 4 hides: 2 mills, of 16s. rent; pasture; and meadow $\frac{1}{2}$ a carucate: value 17l.

In Escepehale (Shephall) 3 hides; pasture; wood for 10 hogs: and value 4l. a year.

IN DANAIS HUNDRED. (DACORUM.)

In Langley the abbot holds 5 hides; 2 mills of 20s.; pasture and wood for 300 hogs.

In Redborne, 7 hides and 1 virgate; 2 mills of 26s. value: pasture and wood for 300 hogs; whole value 30l. a year.

The abbot holds Abfa (Napsbury) for three hides; and 1 mill of 10s. rent; meadow, $\frac{1}{2}$ a carucate; pasture, and wood for 300 hogs: value 3l. and in Edward's time 4l.

In Winrige, Goisfric de Bech held one hide and a half of the abbot; pasture, and wood for 300 hogs: worth 40s. and in Edward's time 50s.

In Titeberfth the same Goisfric held of the abbot half a hide, value 6s.

In Redborne one Amelger held of the abbot 3 virgates and a half, with wood for 200 hogs: and worth 30s. per annum.

The abbot holds in Richemareworde 5 hides. The land is 20 carucates; 1 mill of 5s.; pasture for cattle, and wood for 1200 hogs: value 20l. 10s. but when received 12l.

The abbot holds the manor of Caiffou for 20 hides; of these the abbot possesses 19. The land is 22 carucates; 4 mills of 26s. 8d. rent; meadow 22 carucates; pasture; wood for 1000 hogs: value 28l. and in time of Edward 30l.

In Eldeham (Aldenham) Goisfric holds of the abbot 1 hide, with wood for 100 hogs; now worth 12s. and in time of Edward 20s.

IN ODESIE HUNDRED.

The abbot holds Newham, for three hides and three virgates. The land is 8 carucates, value 9l. and in Edward's time 10l.

Leofflan the
12th abbot.

IN THE HALF HUNDRED OF H12.

In Hegæstaneſtone (Hexton) the abbot holds 8 hides and 3 virgates ; 2 mills of 7s. 4d. rent ; meadow, $\frac{1}{2}$ a carucate ; paſture : value 17l.

In Bennington the abbot holds 1 hide. The land is 2 carucates ; paſture and a grove for hedgewood : value 50s.

Beſide the above poſſeſſions, recorded in Doomsday book, the abbey held the following eſtates : Æthelgive gave by will Gateſden and 30 oxen. Wulph gave Eſtun, or Eaſton, and Oxawic, or Oxeys. King Ethelred, in the time of Leofric the abbot, had given 6 houſes in Flamſtead and Verulam. Egfrid, the ſon of Offa, had given, beſide Pynefeld, land in Therfield (Turville in Bucks), (*terram decem manenſium*) (a).

But after all we are quite at a loſs in any enquiry about the real yearly value of theſe eſtates : the body muſt probably have been always poor, or ſtood in need of a good revenue, from the conſtant expence that attended the bare maintenance of their houſe ; wherein at leaſt 100 perſons were daily reſident, fed, and cloathed ; beſide the charge of travellers and viſitors, and of the poor relieved at their gates.

Frederic the
13th abbot.

Leofflan died, and *Frederic* was elected in his place before the death of King Edward : and he ſaw the ſhort and bloody reign of King Harold.

The change wrought by the Norman Conqueſt was not merely a diſpoſſeſſing of perſons from their eſtates and houſes, but it went alſo to a perfect alteration of manners and cuſtoms ; for, the conquerors not only employed the utmoſt deriſion on the nobles and gentry, but compelled them and others to praſtiſe a more poliſhed mode of dreſs (b) and civility ; which was conſidered as ſo ſhocking an inſult, and ſo wanton a mark of foreign dominion, that many of them quitted their houſes and ſought ſhelter in the woods ; where, with, their families, they would conſtruct a kind of houſe, and endeavour to ſubſiſt. And it grew to be cuſtomary with this unfortunate race, whether remaining at home or ſeeking ſhelter in the woods, to barricade their doors every night, and at the ſame time invoke the protection of the Almighty in prayer, as uncertain of ever ſeeing the next day : “ A praſtice this” ſays *M. Paris*, “ which continues even to this day (1252) “ though the dangers are paſt.” The conquerors introduced alſo numberleſs vices and immoralities before unknown to the Saxons. They praſtified rapine and perjury, as being ſupported therein by their ſuperi-

(a) Mon. App. 37, 39.

(b) To ſhave their beards and trim their hair.

ors; and they indulged themselves in extreme uncleanness and debauchery, in late hours and gaming, and in uttering most dreadful oaths and imprecations with impunity: vices which were shocking from their novelty as much as from their atrocious nature. Frederic the
13th abbot.

This abbot (Frederic) perceiving the road to London, which was by the Watling-street, to be much infested with thieves and robbers, who sheltered themselves in the thick woods adjoining, demised the manor of Aldenham to the abbot of Westminster for a term of 20 years; he engaging to defend and guard the road, and protect all travellers; paying the yearly rent of one hundred shillings, and four fat oxen. This abbot of Westminster was Theobald, who in right of that abbey had in possession the adjacent manor of Titbury and Kendals. But being a familiar friend of the Conqueror, and having good interest in the Court, he not only did not fulfil his engagement, but thirsted after more; and desired to be possessed of a fine wood or grove not far distant from Aldenham, called, for its beauty and pleasantness, Prudeitti (a); alleging that the same was within the manor, and ought to be considered as part thereof: at the end of the 20 years, he refused to give up the manor, pretending losses and injuries from being denied in his claim to that wood; and, being supported by his Norman friends, kept possession, and gave all possible trouble and vexation to the abbot and monks of St. Alban.

Frederic died about 10 years after his election, which was in 1066; but he began to rule the abbey and transact the business relating to it, two years before, though not solemnly installed and invested with all the rights of abbot until the end of Edward's reign, in the beginning of 1066. He was one of those Englishmen who could not submit to a foreign master, even had he ruled with justice, or with humanity: for, the new king had come in by that right which subsists only among men of the sword, but is no right amongst patriots, and men of civil prudence. William had from the beginning ruled with such severity, and tyrannical authority, as to alienate the minds of all his new subjects: and he found it necessary to hold that sword always drawn, which had gained him the possession at first. His administration, though sworn to observe the laws and customs of the realm, was conducted in many respects quite opposite, and in others with much political craft and severity. For, in order to separate the English nobles when he feared a confederacy, he would rob one of his estate in Eng-

(a) From the British word *Pruddau*, mournful, pensive, decent, comely. Perhaps the wood now called Bury Grove, of fir-trees, and situate west of the church.

Frederic the land, and give him another in Normandy; and unite the Normans, such as were in military rank and fame but unprovided, to the rich heiresses in England, and to the utter disherison of her male kindred.

Frederic the
13th abbot.

The discontented and oppressed nobles began to unite for a public defence: those of the north put themselves under the advice and conduct of Alfred the archbishop of York; and those of the south considered the abbot of St. Albans at the head of their confederacy: they had also with them the bishop of Worcester, named Walstan, and Walter bishop of Hereford, and many other of the nobles: and their plan was to bring their new king to better terms if possible, or to take arms and set on the throne Edgar Etheling, who in those days was called *Engelondes Dereling*; and was in truth the right and lawful heir to the crown, being descended from the Saxon family that had last sat on the throne: he had fled into Hungary, and was now returned to this country.

The king, perceiving the discontent to become formidable, caused Stigand, the archbishop of Canterbury, to be thrown into prison (where he confined him for four years, until he died), under a charge that Stigand had usurped the archi-episcopal chair; which, though true, might be a just cause for trial, &c. but not for perpetual imprisonment. The king sent for Lanfranc, who was abbot of Caen in Normandy, and placed him in Stigand's room at Canterbury, and made him his privy counsellor and chief minister during the rest of his reign. And here I must note, that, when Lanfranc went to Rome for his pall and investiture, and came afterward into England, he had in his train a near relation and brother monk of Caen, named Paul, whom we shall see advanced to the place of abbot of St. Albans.

But this confederation had such an effect on William, that, by the advice of Lanfranc, he submitted to the terms required by the nobles and bishops, and consented to meet them at Berkhamptude; where, in the presence of Lanfranc, he swore upon all the reliques of the church of St. Alban, and Frederic administered to him an oath, 'that he would keep and observe inviolably all the ancient laws of the realm, which his pious predecessors, and especially the holy Edward, had established.' Yet was his government so oppressive that no trust could be put in him; and Edgar thought fit to fly into Scotland, and other nobles into Denmark and Norway: Walter, the bishop of Hereford, lay concealed in Wales: and Frederic took refuge in Ely with the abbot and monks of that place, where he soon after died, of mortification and grief.

The king kept the abbacy vacant near the space of one year, committing great mischief and devastation on the manors, estates, and tenants

tenants of the same : and, had not Lanfranc restrained him, he would have destroyed the monastery itself, beyond all possibility of recovery. In the year 1077, Lanfranc procured of the king this preferment for *Paul* his kinsman, and, as some conjectured, his son. And Paul was the first abbot of this church after England had been subdued to the Norman Yoke.

Paul the 1st
abbot.

This abbot within the first eleven years of his government rebuilt the church, and all the adjacent buildings of the monastery, except the bakehouse and millhouse : and in these immense charges of building he was much assisted by Lanfranc, who gave him for that purpose 1000 marks, of 13s. 4d. each. But when it is said by my author, *M. Paris*, that he rebuilt the church, this must be understood only of so much of the present building as comprehends the choir or body, the tower or steeple, and the east end called the saints' chapel, where stood afterward the shrine of Alban ; with the transept north and south, and part of the nave, as far only as the screen. All this is of one uniform style, and in the plainest and rudest form of the Gothic ; being much inferior in beauty to many buildings which had been erected some years earlier.

This construction is said to be intirely built of *brick*, that is, of the Roman tile ; which seems to intimate that the former church had been built of stone. which having been taken out of the ruins of Verulam, and being originally brought from the Totternhoe quarries, was found by Paul to be utterly decayed ; which decay might have happened not only from old age and length of time, from the days of Offa to Abbot Paul's ; but most probably from its being laid and fixed in the new work by Willegod, in an unskilful manner ; that is, in some way different from its natural position in the quarry. And one principal cause of the plain and rude style of Paul's building was this, that his materials, namely, the Roman tile, would not admit of so many shapes and forms, and elegant curve lines, as stone would ; being too hard to be cut, but yet extremely proper where nothing was aimed at, or thought requisite, but mere strength and solidity. And, if we reflect on this circumstance, we shall see a reason why the arches are semicircular, with a coarse pillar between two ; why the inner surface of the walls would not admit of even courses ; and why the edges of the great arches under the tower are all void of the least degree of embellishment, or even variation.

And that the rudeness of this work is intirely owing to the rude and untractable nature of the materials, which are wholly of the Roman tile, without any stone, even in those parts where stone only
ought

Paul the 14th
abbot.

ought to have been used, seems highly probable from there being at this time no want of good artists and skilful builders; since it is manifest, that, at the very time when Paul was building here, at York the new archbishop, Thomas, (brought from Normandy) was constructing that most exquisite and perfect of all Norman edifices, the present cathedral. Thomas came to York in 1070, and died in 1101, and in that space re-edified not only the church, which is the most admired pattern of this kind and order of building in the kingdom, but he also rebuilt a great part of the city, after the Danes had burnt the whole a few years before. This cathedral church is $161\frac{1}{2}$ yards in length, and $35\frac{1}{2}$ in breadth, and probably the largest in England; but, beside its magnitude, it is a specimen of the most beautiful in this style; and shews that the art and the taste of the artist did not improve in later ages; but endeavoured to excel by new ornaments and more profuse decorations only (a).

And Paul would have built in a better style, had he not confined himself to such improper materials. And we see how the work did improve, when the Roman tile was all used, and recourse was had to stone: for, from the screen before mentioned to the great west door was built in the later years of Paul, or the beginning of Richard's time, by different undertakers and companies of builders; and the whole was complete when dedicated in 1115.

Paul was moreover a very prudent and religious man, and by degrees worked such a reform in the conduct and behaviour of the body under his care, by virtue of the rules and statutes which he had received from Lanfranc (b), and which had been approved by the pope, that the monastery of St. Alban was called the school of religion: and this good fame drew towards him the inclination and affections of many of the bishops and principal persons of the land. By his zeal and prudence he obtained a restitution of Eiwood (which was a very

(a) Lincoln cathedral was built in the time of Henry II. by Bishop Hugh, who came out of Burgundy.

(b) The Norman Conquest had caused many innovations in the civil and ecclesiastic affairs of the kingdom; but in nothing more than in encouraging learning, and improving all places of religious discipline. William introduced many very learned and religious men, and among them this Lanfranc, who had been born of honourable parents at Pavia, bred up in that famous university, was admitted a monk of St. Bec in Normandy, and chosen by Duke William to go to the pope twice as his ambassador, was made his privy counsellor, and at his appointment to the see of Canterbury was made the king's prime minister and regent in his absence. His works still extant shew him to be a man of great learning and sound judgement: and the statutes of reform, which he either made or collected from others, shew him to be zealous for the monastic institutions.

pleasant

pleasant wood, situate between the present ruins of Sopwell and St. ^{Paul the 14th} Julian) and of three farms called Tiwa, (Tewin) Apfa, (or Napibury), ^{abbot.} and Wycumb; all which, in the time of King Edward, had been of ancient right possessed by this church; but afterwards, in times of trouble and distress, being granted as a pledge for money borrowed, they were retained, and in a manner alienated; but the usurpers, Odo Bishop of Bayeux, and Remigius Bishop of Lincoln, were now induced by the intreaties of Paul, and the influence of a little money, and through a dreadful fear of the martyr (says *M. Paris*), to restore them to the Church: and Jeffry de Anesi became tenant of the Vill of Wycumb under Abbot Paul. He recovered also the village and manor of Redburn, and that of Childwic, which had both been unjustly withheld from the church: and this withholding was very common with tenants, who thought they could by fraud or force defend their usurpations and new claims.

In Paul's time many new benefactions were made to this church; viz. two hides of land in Shephal; three yard-lands in Potton; and one carucate at Leting; some land at Talinton; three mansions, or tenements with gardens, at Glaiton in Rutland; in Cambridge the church of St. Bennet, and that of All Saints; and in London many more churches, one of which the abbot exchanged with the abbot of Westminster for one that had been the chapel (a) of Offa the founder and was contiguous to his palace (b): but this latter by neglect and ruin was sunk into a small tenement. Beside these, there was given one church in Stamford, and eleven acres of land without the town; the church also of Glaiton, with the tithes thereof, which were afterward assigned by this abbey for the maintenance of a cell at St. Mary's at Belvoir. There were given also the tithes of Cundell, Rington, Royns, Bretham, Herlay, Thamesford, and Clifton; also part of the tithes of Esendon, and Bayford, and Hertingfordbury; the church also of the Holy Trinity at Wallingford, and half a hide of land without that town: unto which church he sent some monks to form a cell, and live under rules prescribed by this church.

At this time also, Robert de Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, caused certain monks of this church to dwell in the church of St. Mary, at Tinmouth, where had been interred the body of Oswin, King of Northumberland, and Martyr, and there to constitute a cell, subordinate to this church. The cell at Belvoir was founded and constructed by Robert de Totheni. Another cell was founded at Hertford by

(a) Now St. Alban's, Wood-street.

(b) This had likewise been the Palace of *Athelstane* the Saxon King, and thence comes the name of *Adel*, or, as it is now written, *Addle*-street.

Paul the 14th abbot. Robert de Limisi(a), and an ancient cell at Binham was conferred on this church.

But, among other things, one Robert, a very stout soldier, who lived at Hatfield, and being one of the Norman leaders had received that vill and manor in the distribution, gave two tenths of the tithes of his demesne; assigning it for the purpose of purchasing and providing books for the monks: for, this Robert was a man of letters, and a diligent hearer and lover of the Scriptures. The tithes of Redburn were assigned to the same purpose. And the best writers and copyists were sought for far and near for transcribing books; and their diet so provided for them, that they might never be taken off or hindered in this employment. The abbot, in return for these favours, gave to Robert, for the use of his chapel in his court or palace at Hatfield, two suits of pontifical vestments (which in those days consisted of many garments, and those highly enriched with gold and silver), one silver cup, a mass book, and other necessaries. Having thus furnished Robert's chapel, a particular room in the abbey was set apart for these copyists, called the *Scriptorium*: and by their means twenty-eight volumes of the choicest books were procured, Lanfranc furnishing the originals: beside these, they prepared eight psalteries, a collection of the collects, another of the epistles, and a book containing the chapters of the Gospel, to be read throughout the year; and also two texts (probably of the Vulgate Bible) much ornamented with gold and silver and precious stones: beside ordinals, or a sort of rubrick missals; troparia, or books of sequences or responses; consuetudinaries, and several other books in daily use.

This may give one some idea how manifold and perplexed the divine service was in those days; how little calculated for the instruction and edification of the congregation, being all performed in the Latin tongue; and how perplexing to the clergy, unless they were daily exercised in it.

The women, who lived in the monastery as servants and attendants, he obliged to appear at the holy offices in the church, allotting for them a place called the Almonry. He directed also that they should be clothed in one uniform dress, called a black mantle, and observe certain times for rest and for silence, for the offices of the house and for going abroad: and these henceforth began to be called nuns or holy women.

(a) Ralph de Limisi held lands at Caldicot, value 40s.; in Pirton, value 20l.; in Amwell, value 14l. 10s.; in Hainstone (Ansley), value 10s. *Doomsday*.

After he had rebuilt the offices, he made many regulations in the diet of the monks: restraining them from immoderate use of flesh meat, and causing them to live on pickled herrings (a). As a punishment to any offending monk, he compelled him to bear a lantern about the choir, during the service in the night time; as well to distinguish him, as to keep the rest from drowsiness and indolence: and, for a greater offence, or while any one was doing penance, he was compelled to carry the lantern very high: and, for the correction of the more obstinate and incorrigible, he built a strong but horrid jail, which remains to this day with very little alteration, and serves for offenders committed by the civil power; to whom is descended all that high authority, which great lords possessed in their manors, and the great abbots over all their estates. He enjoined a strict silence in the church, in the cloister, in the refectory, or hall, and especially in the dormitory. In the infirmary also a dead silence was ever to be observed, and no meat to be eaten, unless the sick were beginning to recover; and they were strictly forbidden to go beyond the door of this place, which opened into the cloister, unless to the bath or for some allowed cause. He furnished the tower with bells; and to these were added two more of a large size, by Litholf, a man of great rank, who lived in the woody part of this country. Paul also gave to the church a large silver basin, in which wax might burn at all times without being extinguished; also three candlesticks richly adorned with gold and silver, to be placed on the great altar; and two more of curious work, and gilt only, to be borne on special festivals, with their wax lights, before the martyr in procession. He also adorned with stately painting all the rooms behind the great altar, called *Concameratio*, in which was afterwards placed the saints shrine.

Paul the 14th
abbot.

Lanfranc, who had restored the church at Canterbury, and that at Rochester, to their ancient splendor, and laid out great sums in buildings for the monks, and by his industrious care had recovered to the cathedral at Canterbury twenty five manors (b) that had been torn from it, departed this life in 1089; having been under the displeasure (c) of the young King William II. for two years, and forced to fly into Normandy. In his room was Anselm placed by the King: but the latter

(a) Called by the Normans *Harenpie*.

(b) Offa had been a great benefactor to the church at Canterbury, having given many estates in 750; and in 791 he gave to it the manor of Otford, and 12 plowlands at Tenham. *Dug. Mon. I. 19.* And to Rochester he had given the manor of Frendsbury.

(c) He had been preceptor to William and reproved him now for his enormities.

Paul the 14th ^{abbot.} refused to make restitution of the temporalities, and kept them for two years; to the great injury of the prelate and impoverishment of the estates. Anselm had been abbot of Bec, and was an intimate friend of Lanfranc and of Paul; and, during his distress from the King's persecution, he was greatly assisted by the liberality of Paul. But in the year 1093 Paul also died, on his return from Timmouth, where he had been visiting the cell and directing the future government of that body.

M. Paris cannot conclude his account of Paul's improvements and benefactions without accusing him of great neglect in some other matters. He was charged with losing the manor of Barton (probably in Bedfordshire) which had been held by some simple Englishman; but which, together with the body of the deceased owner, was snatched up and kept by the abbot of Ramsey, who was another simple Englishman. He lost also many other estates by letting them to farm. Another great and inexcusable neglect was, that, like his predecessors, he had never brought the body of their illustrious founder (with his tomb) to be deposited in this church. But, what was the greatest crime, he demolished the tombs of all the former abbots and great men, who had been interred in this place; although they were descended from the royal family, or of high birth and rank; and whom, Paul, being himself of low descent, used to call *rude and ignorant* men, merely because they were English. Paul also granted to Peter de Valoinges, a Norman chief who lived at Hertingfordbury, the wood of Northaw to farm, on condition that Peter paid the yearly rent of 25s. and two hawks, to hold the same during his natural life, and no longer: but Paul had taken a fine of 100s. to be induced to grant it on these terms: and this laid the foundation of a great dispute, as will be related; although the said Peter, and his two sons, William and Roger, declared in the chapter, that they held not the said estate in fee, nor any longer than the father's life, unless the abbot should consent. There was also one Robert, the mason or master-builder, a man of great fame and excellence in his profession; to whom and his heirs Paul granted lands in Syret (Sarret) and in Wanthony; and one house in the town of St. Alban, free of rent and taxes: which lands in Syret had been before held by Derlewin for a rent of 60s. But Robert in his last illness, knowing his title to be bad, made a resignation in form, and prevented a loss to the church. Paul had also granted to one Humbald, at the request of Lanfranc, the lands called Westwic, to hold during his life; and other grants and provision did he also make to many other relations and friends from Normandy, who were mean illiterate persons; unadvisedly and secretly wasting the goods of the church.

C H A P T E R II.

1097

AFTER the death of the venerable Paul, the church suffered a vacancy for the space of four years; during which time Rufus received all the profits, and impoverished the estates by cutting down the timber, and extorting money from the tenants, and from the inhabitants of the town of St. Alban. And in this time also a great dissension arose, in the abbey, between the old interest and the new; that is, between the English and the Normans. This was happily ended in 1097, when *Richard* undertook the pastoral charge. This man was descended of a good family in Normandy, and being an intimate friend of the King's, and also of Henry the first, was enabled to gain great acquisitions to his church, and as strenuously to defend them. In his time there was given to this church, the church of St. Mary, of Wymundham in Norfolk, with all its appurtenances, to be converted into a cell. The church of Hatfield Peverel also, with the church of Melbrook in Bedfordshire, was given for the same purpose. There was given also a manor called Tinghurst in Berkshire, with its church; and a village, called Wilstead; with land to the value of 30s. per annum, at Wallingford; and also the manor of Eastwell in Kent.

Richard the
15th abbot,

Many other benefactions of less note, and of obscure places, were made in Richard's time; for, it was a practice in those days to place their younger sons in these religious communities, when men of small estates could not provide for them, and to grant in frank-pledge a portion of land or tithes for their maintenance. And this was one great benefit of these institutions, and what kept up their credit for so many ages, that they were not only the schools of religion when well governed,

Richard the 15th abbot. and the source of instruction for the neighbouring parishes, to whom the abbey sent out preachers every Sunday ; but they received and sustained many old servants, and younger sons and relations who had no portion from the paternal inheritance, and in whose time there was no other profession, trade, or employment, to occupy them. And their liberalities to the poor and the destitute, the sick and the diseased, were great beyond the example of the present times in any place, except in established hospitals ; most of which, it is to be noted, had their rise and beginning when these monasteries were suppressed.

The cell at Tinmouth, founded as above by Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, had received many endowments and benefactions, and was in so reputable and prosperous a state, that Richard obliged them to pay to the mother-church of St. Alban a yearly sum of thirty shillings ; besides the abbot's expences for himself and twenty followers, whenever he should choose to make a visitation to that place (a).

The principal events of his time were the consecration of this church, which never had received this solemn dedication since it had been rebuilt ; and, as this was thought necessary, it must be concluded that Paul made a perfect new structure from the ground, and not a repair of the old church. And accordingly, at the time of Christmas, in 1115, a great assembly of bishops and nobles was gathered by invitation ; such as, Geoffry, Archbishop of Rouen ; Richard, Bishop of London ; Ralph of Durham ; Robert of Lincoln ; and Roger of Sarum ; with many abbots. There were present also King Henry I. and his good Queen Matilda ; with many earls, barons, and nobles, both of England and of Normandy ; and a great body of inferior clergy. These were all lodged and entertained in the monastery and town, from the 27th of December till the 6th of January, at the expence of the abbey ; and assisted at the solemnity of the consecration. And the king gave to the church, and confirmed by grant, the manor of Bishopscote.

Another event was this ; that, during the Abbot Richard's visit at Tinmouth, he received a wonderful cure of a withered arm, with which

(a) We may here discern how much the interest and character of Paul had contributed to procure donations and grants to his church : and especially from his countrymen the Norman captains ; who, in all the new grants made to them, built where wanted a small cell, and furnished the same with monks, and thereby connected the cell with some great abbey ; an institution this, and custom, very beneficial to the great lord of the manor and his tenants ; as not only administering to them all spiritual aids, but also promoting civilization and all temporal arts. Of this sort was the cell at Belyoir, founded by Tetheni ; that at Hertford by Limisi, and most of the rest.

he had been afflicted many years. It is related, that, being present at ^{Richard the} Durham, when the monks were removing the corpse of St. Cuthbert (a), ^{15th abbot.} the founder of Durham Cathedral and the apostle of the North, he assisted to lift and support the shrine, and received from that instant a cure of his malady, and found his arm restored to health. Now, whether this was a miracle, or performed by the intervention of second causes, as was probably the case (for, it is more likely, that by some sudden and uncommon exertion he might stretch the contracted sinews, and cause the humours to flow again and nourish the part, than that the Almighty should work a miracle, when there was no just occasion), yet, in compliance with the credulity of the times, he would consider it, not as a blessing from God and worthy of grateful thanks, but as a miracle wrought on him by the intercession of Cuthbert. And accordingly, on his return, he built a wall, or screen, across the nave of the church, about 50 feet below the choir; and, adjoining to the wall, a chapel, dedicated to St. Cuthbert. This chapel stood on the west side of the said screen, and had service performed in it and an altar; but has been long since pulled down, though the screen remains to this day.

After he had ruled this church and abbey 21 years he died, in the year 1119. He is called Richard de Albany, or D'Aubeny, (*de Exaquo*), being of Norman extraction. And the faults or neglects laid to his charge are, that he lost to the church some of their lands and estates, by enriching his relations and countrymen with beneficial leases, &c. For, he granted the vill of Stanmore for 60s. annual rent; and the land of Sopwell to Robert the builder for 8s. And the lands of Syret, after Robert had surrendered the same, he gave to Peter, the butler, or cupbearer, of William Earl Moreton.

Richard was succeeded by the Prior of the abbey named *Geoffrey de Gorham*: from a place of that name in Normandy; he being descended of an illustrious family which dwelt at Caen. While a secular, he had been invited by Richard to come over, and take the charge and government of a school belonging to this abbey; but, he delaying, the school was conferred on some other, and Geoffrey went to Dunstable (b) ^{Geoffrey de Gorham 16th abbot.} and

(a) From Lindisfarne to Durham. Cuthbert died in 688.

(b) Henry I. had established here in 1107 a number of the canons regular of St. Augustine, in a priory now erected and endowed. These canons were supposed to be more pure and uncorrupt than the common monks, and approached near to the seculars; but were confined to a conventual life. They were first instituted by Ivo, Bishop of Chartres,

Geoffrey de
Gorham
16th abbot.

and read lectures, &c. in the school of St. Catharine(a); and, for the greater dignity of his appearance, he borrowed of the sacrist of the abbey the choral copes; but soon after his house was by accident burnt down; and all his books, together with the copes, consumed to ashes. On this, he gave himself, as a whole burnt offering, unto God, saith my author, and assumed the religious habit in the monastery.

One of the principal deeds of this abbot was to regulate and amend the œconomy of the house, and to make a more just and proper assignment of its revenues. And in this work he began with adding 5s. a week to the expence of the kitchen, to augment the commons of the monks. The allowance and distribution of their income was thus; they had, in all their manors, fifty-three farms, that is, of 46s. each on an average. And this sum of 46s. was allowed every week: the steward of the abbot's household had 13 of that sum, and the steward of the monks the remaining 33. Of which 33, three shillings were allowed for maintaining 9 pack-horses, to fetch their provisions from London or elsewhere; and the remaining thirty were for the purchase of the provisions. So that, at this stinted allowance, they were to live, in number 60 at least; and the abbot to enjoy near half as much for his own splendor and dignity. And they had an overplus of rent, of only 46s. or one farm more, for all extraordinary charges and repairs. But he was enabled to make this addition to their former allowance by getting a rent of 12l. a year (now perhaps beginning to make some returns) for the manor of Eastwell: and 12s. more for the land of Robert of Eiwood; and 8s. more for the land of Wimund of Barnet. All which makes 13l. or 5s. per week through the year.

Chartres, in the 10th century; and came into great repute for their sanctity and good order: were brought into England by Edelwald, confessor to Henry I. and placed first in a priory at Rostel in Yorkshire. Queen Maud gave them the priory of the Holy Trinity in London, now called Duke's place. And in 1117 a noble earl of Norman extraction, named Gilbert, gave them a great priory at Merton in Surrey; refounded in 1274 by Walter de Merton, Bishop of Rochester. And in the time of Edward I. these regular canons of St. Augustine were found to be possessed of 51 priories, and at the dissolution of 57 in England. Most of them had been founded by Henry I. or by others in his reign; and none exceeded that of Merton in revenue, which was near 1000l. per annum.

(a) This school was probably in the priory now founded by Henry. Catharine was reckoned, in the opinions of the Romish church, to be the patroness of learned men. But it is quite unknown who this Catharine was. She is thought to have been introduced from the Greek Church; and the name imported hither, together with sundry relics and other superstitions, by some of the Crusaders. *Arch. Ecc. Hist.* 9 Cent.
But,

But, beside this, they had every week two seams or quarters of wheat for the kitchen ; and every year 60s. from Aspa, or Napsbury, for the purchase of milk. And Geoffrey assigned also all the cheese which came yearly from their demesne, in Langley, Sandridge, and Walden. Moreover, there were yearly presents, *Xenia*, from some of the manors ; to be divided between the two stewards, after a third was reserved for the entertainment of the guests and their retinue. These presents came from Norton and Newnham, at three special seasons, at Christmas, at Easter, and on St. Alban's day, to the amount of 15s. yearly : from Hexton came 6s. in like manner. From Caislow, or Cassio, came at Christmas 2s. and 24 hens ; at Easter, 2s. and 600 eggs ; and on St. Alban's day 2s. and 24 cheeses, after a form and manner prescribed. From Rickmersworth, at Christmas, 48 hens and 1 hog ; at Easter, 1000 eggs, and 1 hog. From Cuddicote and Walden, at Christmas, 50 hens and 1 hog ; at Easter, 1000 eggs, and one hog. All which were to be distributed between the stewards. They had also four mills ; one at Sopwell, another at Stanekfield, and two called Park Mills : which, together, were bound to furnish, for the use of the monks one thousand of good eels every year. Beside these, the abbot was bound to provide yearly 4 seams or quarters of good bread corn, 4 of the finest flour, and 6 of oats.

Geoffrey also appointed the church of Rickmersworth, and all its appurtenances, to the secretary of the monastery, to be by him applied in providing the ornaments of the church, and repairing the decays thereof. The tithes and profits of this church used to go to the common stock ; but this was a new and special appointment of the same : and it is probable that at this time the said parish-church was turned into a vicarage, and some small articles of tithe allotted by the writ of endowment for the resident vicar ; who being unmarried, and perhaps a monk sent to the church on a Sunday, was thought well maintained if he could get milk, eggs, wool, and garden-herbs. The secretary was bound to give an account, on the day of the abbot's accession, what charges he had made, and what was proper to be made : and on this occasion his duty was to dress up the monastery as splendidly as possible : and the whole convent attended divine service, and passed the day with great solemnity and pomp.

He made a donation also of the church of St. Peter, and all the appurtenances thereof, to the perpetual use of the infirmary : and enjoined one of the monks to act as master and provider (a) of the infirmary ; to buy all

(a) Infirmarius.

necessary

Geoffrey de
Gorham
16th abbot.

Geoffrey de
Gorham
16th abbo.

necessary medicine and refreshments for the sick and aged ; and to provide the wine or mead for the use of the refectory. every Sunday, or on one holyday instead of a Sunday, which had usually before been provided at the expence of the abbot. And this donation was confirmed on the great altar every year ; with threats of excommunication to all violators and impugnors thereof. His predecessor Richard had set apart the alms, which had used to be given to the poor, for the maintenance of the copyists. But Geoffrey restored the alms to the poor, and assigned a certain portion of dinner from the monks table for the company of writers, that they might not be hindered in procuring their victuals.

But, beside these improvements in the œconomy of the convent, he built a church and hospital near the way that leads to London, for the use of lepers : and endowed the same with sundry portions of tithe : as two parts in ten of the corn tithes of St. Stephen's and St. Michael's parishes ; but with the whole tithe of St. Alban's parish, value 60s. and the whole corn tithe of the lordship of Hamstude, and of the lordship of Kingsbury. This was built and endowed with the advice and consent of the convent, and dedicated to the honour of God and of St. Julian.

The leprosy seems to have been as common and as filthy a disease at this time as it was in the days of Moses, and in Judæa at all times ; but whether it arose from the same causes may be doubted. It did not arise, in either of those periods, from excess of gross food and animal flesh ; for, the Jews were accustomed to eat very little flesh, and the monks were allowed to eat none ; but probably from the use of woollen garments next the skin, which are thought to render it unfit for perspiration, and of course to breed obstructions in the pores, and cause cutaneous disorders : to this may perhaps be added want of personal cleanliness. The method of cure, if there was any in those days, we know not ; nor ever find any persons cured of this malady but by the miraculous word of the Son of God. But, as these afflicted persons were shunned and avoided by all others, it became a matter of great beneficence to provide a separate house, &c. for them. And so universally did this charity prevail, that a larger hospital for lepers was founded at Burton Lazars, in the county of Leicester, with which all others were in some degree connected, and did hold an intercourse.

Geoffrey confirmed the grants made to St. Julian's, and procured a confirmation thereof from Pope Gregory, in the 2d year of his pontificate. He procured also a charter of confirmation from Henry I. and a grant of one penny a day out of his treasury for the use of this hospital. Abbot Roger confirmed the same with all its

bene-

benefactions in the year 1287: and then abbot Richard II. (Wal-
 lingford) confirmed the recovery of the 60s. which had been un-
 justly withheld from this hospital; and dates his confirmation on the
 day of the 7 holy sleepers, in the year 1329(a). The abbot Michael,
 in the year 1344, thought proper to revise and amend their statutes, as
 if it were like to be a large-body of brethren; but, by his own confession,
 the house never had more than three at once, sometimes but two, and
 often one. Yet he framed 39 statutes for the government of this
 house: which statutes direct the number not to exceed six, who shall
 be elected a brother leper, and their dress and diet; with others that
 concern the priests, their dress, duty, and appearance: for, beside
 the leprous brethren, there were five priests always resident; one of
 which was a kind of superior, and called *Rector Capellæ Juliani*.

Geoffrey de
 Gorham
 16th abbot.

Another cell, founded by abbot Geoffrey in 1140, was that of Sop-
 well; where, having observed two pious women to have erected a hut
 for their dwelling, he constructed a house for their better accommoda-
 tion, and ordered that thirteen sisters should inhabit the same, under
 certain rules and orders, together with a chaplain. They were al-
 lowed a place of worship and a cemetery; and he allotted them certain
 rents and possessions: and, because the two first women used to dip
 their dry bread in the water of the spring, the place was called
 Sopwell.

This abbot built some additions to the abbey: he made a handsome
 apartment with a double roof, it is said, (which means only that it had
 a cieling also), for the entertainment of strangers; and near this he
 built a very handsome chamber, called afterwards the Queen's cham-
 ber: and towards the east he built a small house and chapel for the use
 of an infirmary; into which any sick brother was sent the third day
 after he complained; where he generally was restored to health by being
 allowed flesh meat; and on a perfect recovery he returned to the clois-
 ter, and was again, as before, obliged to abstain from the use of flesh.
 He built also a large hall at Westwick, for the use of a certain friend
 and kinsman, who had shewn great beneficence to the abbey. Geoffrey
 was preparing a very sumptuous shrine for the body of St. Alban,
 and had expended thereon no less than sixty pounds: but, a year
 of great scarcity happening, he converted the gold and silver into
 money, for the relief of the poor: a quarter of wheat at this time rose
 to twenty shillings value; whereas the usual price was four shillings:
 and in the reign of king John, who made an assize of bread in 1203,

(a) These grants and confirmations may be seen in the *Auct. Addit. of M. Paris.*

Geoffrey de
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16th abbot.

the price was calculated for *six shillings*, and down to *eighteen pence*. The year following being plentiful, he collected money, and pursued his intentions with regard to the shrine; and, by the art of a monk named Anketill, he brought the same to great perfection of ornament and show. This Anketill had been bred to the business of a goldsmith, and had passed seven years in the kingdom of Denmark, in constructing curious works for the king, and in superintending his mint: then, coming into England, he chose to fix himself in this abbey, and to assume the habit of a religious. The materials of this shrine were silver gilded; but the upper part of the canopy, called *the crest*, was not finished; though intended to be adorned and enriched with gold and precious stones, whenever they could collect a quantity sufficient. The shrine being erected in the space behind the great altar (a) as built by abbot Paul, a day was appointed for the translation, or removal, of the saint. On this day attended Alexander, bishop of Lincoln, whom the abbot owned as diocesan; Walter, abbot of Ensham, formerly prior of this abbey; Robert of Thorney; and other abbots; together with the whole convent: and in their presence the antient tomb of Alban was opened. But, because a certain college in Denmark, and the monks of Ely also, had asserted and still pretended, that they respectively were possessed of the whole body, or a great part of this saint, the bones were numbered, taken out, and shewed singly; the head was lifted up, for the inspection of all present, by the hands of the venerable Ralph, archdeacon of the church: on the forepart was a scroll of parchment, pendent from a thread of silk, with this inscription, *Sanctus Albanus*; and a circle of gold inclosed the skull, fixed by the order of Offa, engraved with these words, *Hoc est caput Sancti Albani protomartyris Angliæ*. But, in reviewing the bones, the left *scapula*, or shoulder-bone, was missing. However, the translation was effected; and some years after, saith the historian, came two monks with letters credential from the church and monastery of Naumburg, in Germany, saying that they were possessed of this valuable relick, viz. the *scapula*; and that the same had been brought to them, many years since, by King Canute. This translation was a day of great festivity: the abbot ordered three hundred poor persons to be relieved at the gate of the monastery; that the priests should sing four masses (or solemn services); and the rest of the brethren should sing, instead of a mass, fifty psalms. The day of this solemnity was the 4th of the nones of August, in the 29th year of the reign of Henry I. or 1129: and the anniversary was solemnized with great devotion and festivity; with a remission to all

(a) Called the *Presbytery*: and behind the present wall, or screen.

penitents,

penitents, who should attend, of one day's duty of their penance in every week through the year.

Geoffrey de
Gorham
16th abbot.

He ordained also certain days to be kept with peculiar holiness, viz. the feast of the Ascension; that of St. Matthew and St. John; of the blessed St. Giles; the Conception of the blessed Virgin; and of the blessed Catharine. These days were to be celebrated in copes, and he caused seven to be made for the purpose: one was uncommonly rich with gold and precious stones; another with tassels of great value, and ornamented with gold and pearls; four were enriched with the best and most costly gold fringe; the 7th was of purple, and only decently adorned. He provided five other habits, called chasubles (a), one of which was wholly covered with gold, to the value of six marks and a half, beside a costly gold fringe, very broad, and ornamented with rich tassels and precious stones, all laid upon a bright crimson cloth. But this rich vestment was burnt in the time of his successor Ralph, in order to melt out the gold, with which it was too much loaded. He caused to be prepared many other rich garbs for the particular services or solemnities in which the abbot was to appear; for, they all seem intended to augment his splendor and personal dignity rather than to promote the glory of God and edification of man. He provided also a large cup and patin; which he afterward sent as a present to the pope, Celestine, to assuage the thirst of his avarice, when he was trying to appropriate the rule and election of this abbey, and perhaps the revenues, to himself: this succeeded, and the pope gave up his exorbitant claims for the present. He made a large table, or plate, of gold and silver and choice gems, to be laid on the great altar; but this, on a very urgent occasion, was melted, and given to earl Warren and others, when, in the time of king Stephen, they were preparing to burn down the town. He made also several vessels for burning frankincense; and rich candlesticks; and a vessel for the reception of certain relicks in their possession, viz. of St. Bartholomew, Ignatius, Laurence, and Nicasius, martyrs.

He provided books of all sorts, necessary for the service of the church; one missale, inclosed in a binding of gold; another, in two volumes, incomparably illumined with gold, and written in an open and legible manner, that is, fair, correct, and without abbreviations; a psalter also of great value, illumined; one book containing the benedictions pronounced by bishops, and the sacraments or religious oaths and obligations; one book containing exorcisms, or forms of praying out the devil; and one book of collects. He gave also one large *dorsale* (b), on which was represented the finding the body of

(a) These were garments that covered the whole person.

(b) Cortina ad dorsum altaris pendens.

Geoffrey de St. Alban; and another of less size, where was shewn the history of the wounded who fell among thieves; and a third, shewing the history of the prodigal son.

Geoffrey de
Gosham
10th abbot.

These splendid gifts did Geoffrey make to his church: but my author cannot dismiss his character without making mention of some things that argued negligence or imprudence. A bad bargain, that Richard had made with Gospatrick, Geoffrey kept and observed; and granted the same lands to the son of Gospatrick by a new charter, though he raised the rent: this had been sixty shillings; but now the lessee was to pay twenty shillings more, and in deficiency of money (*viz.* the 20s.) to pay seven oxen, worth three shillings each. This rent had been settled on the church of Oswin, or, which is the same, the cell of Tinmouth: and it was agreed that, if there was a deficiency of oxen, he should pay three shillings for each to the church of St. Alban. He rebuilt the church, and other buildings of the Holy Trinity of the Wood (*de Bosco*) (a) twice from the ground, after the same had been consumed with fire, and endowed this cell with portions of tithe from Cassio and Watford; but without the consent of the convent, and, as it were, by force. He granted also the wood of Northaw to Roger, the son of Peter de Valoinges. And all the lands of Westwick, which had been granted to Humbald for his life, and which had been set apart at first for the use of the monks table, he granted to the son of Humbald, who had married a sister of Geoffrey. He granted also some lands, near Westwick, to a familiar friend and client, who had been born of obscure origin, at a small hamlet in Normandy, called Gorham: and this he confirmed by charter, against the consent of the convent, and to their great loss and grievance. He had formed a design of completing the canopy of the shrine in a very costly manner; but he was cut off by death, in the month of February, 1146, after he had ruled this abbey 26 years, and some months.

As we have thus seen Geoffrey ruling the conventual body with great order, and regulating the œconomy of the monks, and improving the institution, beyond the example and practice of any predecessor; so to this man was made the first grant of the liberty, by Henry I. (b); that is, the great civil power of holding pleas, and of taking cognizance of all less crimes and offences, which had been punishable only in the leets, the hundred, and the county-courts; with a power of appointing a *seneschalus*, or steward of the hundred; and of receiving, for the use of the abbey, all fines and amercements. This was a grant to the abbot of a portion of the royal authority, and of the profits which

(a) The cell at Merkyate-street. ~

(b) Henry granted a similar charter to the priory which he had founded at Dunstaple. usually

usually went into the king's exchequer : but the powers were no other than what were granted to many other lords, and great men, in several other hundreds ; and who, from presiding in the court, and taking the fines, were called *hundreders*. But, though there was an hundred-court here, before; yet the powers now granted were, the privilege of resembling the county-courts, and holding the same pleas with them. This original grant was reserved in the abbey, in the time of Henry VI. and by him was renewed, in 1440 ; it mentions the offences there cognizable : and, in 1448, Henry grants to the abbot, by a new charter, power to take cognizance of all pleas of lands and tenements, within the hundred of Caysho, and in the presence of his seneschal ; a power, also, to make justices of the peace within the said liberty ; and that the seneschal shall execute the same powers, with regard to all transgressions of felony, as any sheriff of our kingdom.

Geoffrey de
Gorham
16th abbot.

This may be seen in the following History of John Wheathamstead's time, soon after he was re-elected. And here is such proof of the origin of the liberty, that one cannot forbear to wonder at the mistake of Chauncy, when he says, that it was first erected in the time of Edward IV ; but this mistake shall be accounted for, when we come to treat of the new power granted to the abbot, in the early part of that king's reign. The privileges granted to the abbot, on creating this liberty, were the usual ancient privileges derived from the Saxon times, and given in some degree to every lord or great tenant in capite ; viz. *Sac*, *Soc*, *Toll*, *Theam*, *Infangentheof*, and *Outfangentheof*.

By *Sac* was meant, a power to sue a man in his own court.

By *Soc* was meant, a power to implead and punish any offender, or transgressor, in the court of his lord.

By *Toll* was meant, an exemption for the lord or abbot, and all his men, from paying toll in any market.

By *Theam* was meant, the power of having for your property all the children and generations of your villains.

By *Infangentheof* was meant a power of trying any thief or robber in your court, if taken in your fee, wherever the fact was committed. And

By *Outfangentheof* was meant, a power of bringing back and trying your villains in your own court, though the fact might be committed, and the thief taken, elsewhere.

In Geoffrey's time was the abbey of Croyland in a very low and and ruined condition ; and, in order to restore things to their former splendor, it was necessary to have a new supply of monks : on

Geoffrey de application to Geoffrey, he sent to Croyland ten men of established
 Gorham character; and capable to amend the rule and government of that
 16th abbot. abbey. He sent them also another monk named Godfrey; whom at
 Croyland they elected prior; and this prior, after the example of
 Geoffrey, set up a very costly shrine, in the year 1143 (a).

Ralph the Geoffrey was succeeded by *Ralph*, the seventeenth abbot, who had
 17th abbot. been one of the confidential domestic officers of the bishop of Lincoln;
 and, though a layman at that time, he had the care of the bishop's
 chapel, and was keeper of his treasury; or, as called in these days,
 receiver of his revenue. By the bishop's procuring, he was admitted
 into this abbey as a monk; but remained in the service of the bishop
 for some time after; on a promise, that the bishop should procure for
 him the abbey of St. Alban, if the bishop survived Geoffrey. "For
 "the power and influence of bishops," saith *M. Paris*, "hath at
 "times been sufficient to dispose and direct all things in this church,
 "even against its advantage." While he served the bishop of Lincoln,
 which was Alexander, the martial bishop, he attended the lectures of
 one Wodon, an Italian, who explained the Scriptures. And from that
 time he became a lover of books, and furnished this church with many
 volumes. When abbot, he shewed himself a zealous defender of its
 rights and estates; and managed the revenue so well, that at his death
 the convent was clear of all demands, and under pecuniary obliga-
 tions to no person. He built some chambers adjoining to the church,
 for the use of the abbot, of very strong work, and caused the house
 to be covered with shingles of oak; which shews that tiles of the
 modern sort were not then used, and probably not invented.

He went into France, and met the pope, Eugenius, at Auxerre, and
 obtained from him the privilege (b) which had been granted before by
 pope Celestine; and, on his return, purchased, for the use of this
 church, two large palls, of ten marks value each. Geoffrey had
 granted the manor of Shephall to Adam, the steward, for 4l. 12s.
 and Ralph confirmed the same in chapter, and applied the rent to the
 use of the monks table.

Having some suspicions of ill conduct in Alquine, the prior, about
 some table-plate, he caused him to be deposed; and Robert de Gor-
 ham to be elected in his place. Alquine fled to his old friend, Lau-
 rence, the abbot of Westminster; and, they having been familiar
 friends in this abbey before, he was by him received and chosen for
 a monk.

(a) 2 Cont. Mon. p. 370.

(b) This privilege seems to have been only peaceable possession, and a temporary
 security against the avaricious and overbearing claims of the papal court.

Of the faults of Ralph, it is mentioned by *M. Paris*, that he caused one of the rich chafubles, which Geoffrey had provided, to be burnt for the sake of the gold: and the shrine was stripped of all the plates and solid gold, in order to purchase the vill of Brentfield (a) for twenty-four marks: the jewels also, and precious stones, he caused to be sold; when he might have furnished the sum, from selling the gold and silver cups which were used at his table. The rent of the new purchase was applied to repair the buildings, and restore the shrine.

Ralph the 17th
abbot.

Ralph was abbot no longer than five years; and, finding himself decaying, he resigned, and procured the prior, Robert de Gorham, to be elected in his place. He died in July 1151, in the fourteenth year of king Stephen: he was surnamed Gobion, and was of English extraction.

Robert was descended of a good family at Caen in Normandy, and born of a sister of the late venerable abbot Geoffrey. Having heard of the good fortune of his relations in England, he came over from the monastery in which he had been educated; and, bringing with him a testimonial, was readily admitted a monk and brother of the church of St. Alban. Some time after, he took on him the office of secretary, which had under its function the care and repairs of the building: in this employment he rebuilt the chapter-house from the ground, whitened the inside and outside of the church, and covered the greatest part of it, in a very becoming manner, with lead; for, probably, the covering before this time had been of shingles (*scindulis*). In the time of abbot Ralph he had been created prior, which was a sort of sub-abbot, or representative of the abbot; and, on the resignation of Ralph, he was elected abbot by unanimous consent. On his being installed, he gave a pall to this church worth ten marks; which he afterwards presented, by leave of the convent, to the church of St. Oswin at Tinmouth. He was very diligent in all matters that related to the Church's property; and gave great assistance and relief to Lawrence, the new abbot of Westminster; but which Lawrence requited very ill; for, he strove, in a very fraudulent manner, to regain the manor of Aldenham. One of the monks, named Germanus, and made prior of Tinmouth, was thence elected, by the monks of Selby, to be their abbot: and another, named Godfrey, was chosen to be abbot of Croyland; where, by the help of Adam his nephew, and other monks of St. Alban, whom he took with him, when sent thither by Geoffrey, he caused religion and good order again to flourish. King Stephen, having cause to pass through the town, was honourably entertained by the monastery: and one day, while the king was hearing mass, the abbot fell

Robert the
18th abbot.

(a) So named, perhaps, as signifying that it was purchased with *Burnt*, or *Brent*, goods.

Robert the 18th abbot. at his feet, with some relicks of St. Stephen, the first martyr, in his hand; and besought the king, that he would cause the remains of his royal manse, called Kingbury(a), to be demolished; for it harboured persons, who, under pretence of the king's authority to keep the peace and guard the town, were the cause of great disturbance, injuries, and extortions: on which the king gave the said castle or remains (situate, it is said, very near to this abbey) to the abbot, who caused the building to be demolished. King Henry II. soon after his accession, being at Clarendon, abbot Robert went thither, and petitioned him for a grant of the church of Luton and of Hockton: to which the king consented, and confirmed the same by a charter; ordaining that the profits thereof should be set apart for the entertainment of strangers.

About this time, pope Anastatius being dead, his place was supplied by Adrian IV. better known in England by his former and family name, of Nicholas Brekepear; who, being born at Langley, and brought to this monastery to assume the habit of a monk, was refused as insufficient in learning; but came, in after-times, to such pre-eminence as to be chosen pope. The chief events of his history are these: on his being rejected (which was by Richard), he went into Provence, and became a canon in the house of Saint Rufus, and soon after was elected to be their abbot: hence he went to Rome, to expedite some business relative to his abbey, and so far recommended himself to the pope, that he was made bishop of Alba, and then chosen by the cardinals to be pope. His father had been admitted a monk (probably after his son had left him, and his wife was dead) and lived fifty years in the monastery: and, in consideration of his own and his son's merits, he was interred in the chapter-house, not far from the grave of abbot Richard, which was afterwards covered with the tiles of the pavement. On receiving intelligence of the exaltation of his countryman, Robert thought it necessary to make a journey to Rome, on purpose to pay his congratulations: the king, also, encouraging and commanding this compliment, as having some duty to pay on his part. Robert, accordingly, made great preparations; and collected presents, &c. to the value of twenty-seven marks; beside five cups of great value, and three very costly mitres, and sandals, or slippers, and other delectable things; but, in passing the channel, he narrowly escaped shipwreck; yet, having great interest with the Virgin Mary and the martyr, (St. Alban) he escaped and landed safe. When he met the pope, which

(a) Though my author has already said, that Alfric II. demolished this palace in the time of Canute, yet it is probable, that the principal mansion only was thereby meant, and that some of the offices, &c. might still remain, and be the subject of Robert's complaint, and of the king's grant.

was at Beneventum, he presented the mitres, and the sandals ; which last had been worked by the Lady Christina, prioress of Merkyate(a), where Geoffrey, the 16th abbot, had founded a cell for nuns.

Robert the
18th abbot.

After much familiar discourse, the abbot was encouraged to ask a great favour, to which the pope assented. The abbot then requested, that, in consideration of the ' troubles and vexations which their ' bishop (of Lincoln) gave his monastery, the pope would be pleased ' to give them an exemption from all other authority than that of the ' pope himself.' This was granted by Adrian, with many other privileges, which were allowed to no other abbey in England. Soon after, a synod was held at London, under Theobald the archbishop : where the bishop of Lincoln, named Robert de Querceto, that is, of *Cheynies*, having heard that his authority at the abbey of St. Alban's was set aside, refused to appear, but sent a messenger to plead excuse, by reason of weakness and ill health. This privilege was the cause of great dissension between the bishop and the abbot ; and in the eighth year of Henry II. it was determined, in the presence of the king and by his mediation, in a great assembly of bishops and nobles ; wherein, after much argument, it was proved, that the church of St. Alban was *ingenua*, or free-born ; that the bishops of Lincoln had gradually exercised authority therein, by the negligence of the abbot ; that such authority, so long uncontroverted, had become almost legal ; but, as its legality was founded on prescription, and not on any statute, some recompence should be given, for the redemption of its liberties. It was therefore agreed that the abbey should give to the bishop some farm of ten pounds value : and, this being the value of Tynkurste(b), that farm was conveyed and confirmed to the bishop, and his claims hereby annulled.

From the time of Adrian's granting exemption to this abbey, the abbot and his successors assumed the mitre ; and twice a year afterwards he assembled his clergy, and formed a synod, and prescribed rules and laws for the convent and cells, habited in the mitre ; but left to the bishops, as before, all celebration of sacraments, as ordination of priests, &c. consecration of oil and unctions, dedication of churches and altars, and the blessing the abbot, &c. And the next year the venerable bishop of St. Asaph, named Godfrey, consecrated a quantity of oil in the Eucharist at the great altar, and in the presence of the whole convent, to be distributed as formerly to all the churches belonging to this abbey ; the said bishop acting in no respect as the bishop of Lincoln. The same Godfrey also held a general ordination in the chapel of

(a) This cell was so named from *Mer*k, a boundary ; and *Yate*, or *Gate*, a way : it is situated on the border of Hertfordshire, in the high road to Dunstable.

(b) Or Fingest, in Bucks.

Robert the
18th abbot.

the infirmary ; and in the great church dedicated the altar of the Holy Crofs ; and in the church of St. Peter he dedicated another altar, to the honour of St. Nicolas. So that the honour of the mitre, when conferred on any abbot, was not understood to fet him on a parity with the epifcopal order, except that the king always called fuch to a feat among the barons of the realm ; but it exempted the abbot and monaftery from epifcopal vifitation and diocefan jurifdiction : the abbots then taking on them to rule and govern the feculars under their care, and leaving the bifhop to exercife and perform certain minifterial functions in the abbeys, and to govern the other parochial clergy, though without any authority, or jurifdiction, over the vicars, or officiating clergy, of churches that did belong to the abbeys ; becaufe fuch clergy were always members of the monaftic body, and fent out to do and perform the f acred offices in fuch churches. And this probably was the ufage and practice, even after vicarages were endowed and made a feparate eftate, unlefs, in the inftrument of endowment (which always required confent of the bifhop and king), the fubordination and obedience of the vicar was therein transferred to the bifhop, and which was probably the cafe very often.

This elevation of the abbot to the mitre happened in the year 1161, and the 7th of Henry II. (a). But the conteft with the bifhop was fo much agitated and laboured by the contending parties, that the decifion could not be made but by the king in perfon ; who, together with moft of the bifhops, many of the great abbots, fome arch-deacons, and feveral of the earls and nobles, fat during feveral days to hear their claims, and adjust their differences ; and, at length, thefe perfuaded the parties to agree to the compromise above-mentioned, by which the abbot gained an high honour and place of pre-eminence, but by which the body loft an eftate of 10l. a year, and fuffered a charge, in entertainments and lawyers expences, of 140 marks. This tranfaction took place in 1162, in the firft year of Becket's advancement to the fee of Canterbury.

The abbot of Weftminfter, named Lawrence, had given much trouble to Robert ; for, though Robert had affifted him with two hundred marks during the late time of famine and want, yet Lawrence and his people made encroachments on the lands and tenants of the abbey ; in particular on thofe of Sandrugge (or Sandridge), and

(a) About this time Lawrence, the abbot of Weftminfter, who had been bred in this monaftery, compiled, by order of Henry II. a hiftory of the holy martyr and confeffor, King Edward. *M. Paris*, p. 1029.

such as lay near the river Marford, which is still a part of Wheat-hampstead, then belonging to Westminster. Lawrence, also, made new claims of the manor of Aldenham, and sued the abbey, and Robert Tailleboys, their lessee, before the barons of the Exchequer. But Lawrence, fearing the judgement of the court, and being rejected in his offer of twenty-three marks to Tailleboys if he would relinquish his right, a compromise took place; and the abbey confirmed Tailleboys in the quiet possession of his right to pannage for twenty hogs every year in the wood of Aldenham.

Robert the
18th abbot.

But another and more severe trial harrassed the patience and fortitude of Robert; and that was, concerning the wood of Northaw (a) and the danger of losing it. It is proper to remember that Abbot Paul had granted this wood to Peter de Valoinges, a great Norman baron, who dwelt at Hertingfordbury, and to whom the Conqueror had given divers manors and possessions in this county. By the grant he was constituted tenant, or usufructuary, for his life. Abbot Geoffrey had granted it to his son Roger on the like condition; and the grandson Peter had the like grant from Abbot Ralph: but, this Peter being on his death bed, Robert the abbot sent to him two of the brethren, to solicit him to make restitution of the wood of Northaw, according to the terms of the grant. The dying man, in the presence of his soldiers and armed attendants, promised to do so, saying, 'that he held it by no hereditary right; but by the mere grace and favour of the convent, and would surrender the next day.' In the night, this grantee died; and instantly messengers are dispatched by the abbot, to take possession of the wood. But immediately Robert de Valoinges, brother and heir to Peter, (who died without children), makes earnest application to Robert, that he would renew the grant to him; though without success, for Robert would not comply. On this, Robert, the baron, hastens to the King, who was then in France and engaged in the siege of Thoulouse: he there obtained the subject of his petition, and returned with letters written to this effect; 'That he forbade any person to deprive Robert unjustly of any possession, which his predecessors had held by inheritance and the rule of justice.'

(a) And here it is proper to remark, that the true etymology of this place is North-
augh, from the valley, which is there to be seen, vast and tremendous beyond any
valley in all this county; for, in the language of those times, and now in the north
of England, a valley is called a *Haugh*; the Latin writers call *Rosehaugh*, *de Rosa-*
rum Valle; and an artificial valley in a garden is called a *Haugh*: moreover, on
the southern boundary of this county, in East Barnet, there is another valley, with
lands adjoining, which is called at this day by the name of *Suthaw*, or *Southaugh*.

Robert the
18th abbot.

Robert brought these letters to the abbot, and strenuously demanded possession of the wood. The abbot assembled his brethren, and they sat like a court, or grand council, in the consistory or chapter-house. Robert approached, with the letters in his hand, demanding the estate. The abbot rose up and said, these letters ought by no means to have been brought to us by you, who make no distinction betwixt a tenure by inheritance and one by grant. On which, Robert, in great anger, retired, and hastened to the Earl of Leicester, then justiciary, or chief justice of England; for the tenor of the letter was; ‘ If ye do not justice, let Robert Earl of Leicester do it, that the complainant suffer no longer vexation through want of right.’ The earl directly issues his letter to the sheriff of Herts, commanding him to summon the abbot of St. Alban, and to cite him to appear at Northampton, before the said earl, and answer to this complaint in person. Abbot Robert refused to go; but sent a brother, named Hugh, a man of discretion and prudence, who, though with reluctance, undertook the journey. The earl was incensed, and issued another citation. The abbot still declined appearing; the earl gave sentence, adjudging the wood to Valoinges; and the sheriff put him into possession without delay. Then he, Valoinges, thinking that he should be tenant but a short time, from this unjust success, set himself to commit all kind of waste and spoil, beyond the example of any of his predecessors.

The abbot, finding the mischief to be irrecoverable, speeds away to the earl of Leicester, and obtains letters from him, to restrain and inhibit Robert de Valoinges from farther damage and injury. Robert refused obedience to the injunctions, and repeated, with double mischief, the waste and spoil of the wood. The abbot hereupon hastens to the Queen (Eleanor), then in England; and obtains from her letters to restrain the bold proceedings of Valoinges, who, for a while, acquiesced, and then returned to his old practices, and did more mischief than ever. On this, the abbot sent messengers, with the complaint, to pope Alexander; who returned this answer, directed to Theobald archbishop of Canterbury, and Hilary bishop of Chichester; ‘ Whereas, our beloved sons, the abbot and brethren of the monastery of St. Alban, have shewn, by their complaint, that Robert de Valoinges doth unjustly hold the wood of Northaw, their property: We charge you to convene the said Robert within thirty days after the receipt of these letters, and cause him to make restitution, or perform to them full and ample justice, in your presence; which, if he shall perchance, out of contempt, refuse to do, our will is, that you pronounce against him the sentence of excommunication.

‘ And

‘ And if one of you be unable to be present at this business, let it be put in execution by the other.’ Given at Anagnia, 6. cal. Feb. Robert the
18th abbot.

The bishops, on receipt of this papal order, were in the utmost fear and confusion; because Henry II. had forbid, that the sentence of excommunication should be pronounced against any of his nobles. The abbot, therefore, dispatches one of the brethren, laden with presents and promises, to the king, who was before Thoulouse; soliciting his Majesty to give orders to the earl of Leicester, that he, together with Robert de Valoinges, would be pleased to hear this complaint concerning the wood of Northaw, in his own court at Westminster. To this the king was not inclined; but, being softened by the importunities of the monk, he consented to write to the earl; directing, ‘ That he ‘ would not suffer Robert de Valoinges, from that day, to cut any ‘ more timber or wood, or to fell or give away any.’ Which injunction Robert having received, he, with great reluctance, complied with. Robert, the abbot, still resenting the unjust robbery which his church was suffering, repaired, with all speed, to the king, then in Normandy, being returned from Thoulouse (a). The king and the abbot had a long conference on the subject of the wood; the latter claiming justice, the former denying the necessity of it. At length a bargain was struck between these great personages, for 100l. on receipt of which, Robert obtained a rescript to the chief justiciary, commanding him to call before him the respective parties, ‘ and hear their ‘ allegations, and give a decision concerning the right of property, ‘ from the charter of Lanfranc (b), who was made archbishop of Canterbury in 1070, and other charters, and pronounce a definitive ‘ sentence.’

The abbot returned, and laid the rescript before the earl, who cites Valoinges to appear, allowing him only forty days. And, in the mean time, the abbot made a journey to their cell at Thinmow, or Tinmouth, in order to visit and inspect the brethren there settled.

At length the day came for the appearance of the two litigants; and Valoinges refused to appear: the abbot had travelled into Scotland, and was reposing himself in the abbey of Dumfermlin; but Symond, the prior of St. Alban, appeared in his stead, and by his order. The

(a) This was in 1160; and in this year died Theobald, the archbishop. But a more material circumstance that marks this year is, that Henry married his son, aged seven years, to the daughter of the king of France, who was aged three years.

(b) Lanfranc had been a great benefactor to this abbey; for, beside assisting Paul with large sums to rebuild his church, as has been said, he endowed the same with lands and manors; of which Northaw was one.

Robert the
13th abbot.

justiciary proceeded not to a hearing, but issued a second citation to Robert de Valoinges, to appear at the same place, at the end of forty days. On the day appointed the abbot appeared, and Valoinges did not: on which the judge declared the wood to be confiscated to the use of the king; and summoned Valoinges a third time, allowing him six weeks. On the day, the abbot appeared at Leiceſter; and Valoinges did not, nor did he ſend any perſon to anſwer for him, or make exception. On which the earl, with the judgement of the whole court, decreed the wood to the abbot. He then put Robert in poſſeſſion, by the delivery of a branch; and compelled Valoinges to make reſtitution for the miſchief and damage by him committed.

I have been thus particular in the narration of this event, in order to ſhew, how much the rich and great envied the clergy in their poſſeſſions, and how much the latter were employed to combat the violence and artifice of the former: it diſcovers the difficulty of obtaining right in thoſe days; how corrupt the very fountain of juſtice was; and how weak and helpleſs the clergy, even at the height of their proſperity, were, to obtain redreſs, and ſupport themſelves againſt the uſurpations and encroachments of the great and opulent laity. It ſhews alſo, on a compariſon with theſe days, with what wiſdom great men, kings, and miniſters, and courts of law under them, have acted, in ſupporting the rights, and maintaining the body, of Proteſtant clergy; in conſidering them no longer as the lords of the heritage, but as helpers of the faith; and employing them as teachers and inſtructors of the people, in obedience to juſt and mild government, not as the inſtruments and tools of arbitrary rule and unjuſt authority.

This ſame abbot, Robert de Gorham, had another conteſt with the earl of Arundel, whoſe father had founded the cell at Wymundham; and Robert, going to viſit this cell, was very ill-treated by the prior, named Ralph de Nuers, and the ſervants. In ſhort, they denied his authority, and reſuſed him admiſſion; and, having ſent his cook before, as was the cuſtom, to provide for the abbot, the man was beaten, and his horſe ſtolen. The abbot applied to the earl, who lived near, for relief and aſſiſtance: and he interpoſed, by giving correction to the prior and ſervants. But this he did, not ſo much to vindicate the rights of the abbot as to aſſert his own, and manifeſt his own ſuperiority; for, he affirmed that the abbot had no right or juriſdiction there, and that, his father having founded and endowed the cell, he was himſelf the patron and viſitor, to the excluſion of all others. The abbot answered, that it was his, the earl's, duty, to give confirmation to the grants made by his father; that the king's char-

ter

ter (which was all that was necessary to establish a foundation in the time of Henry I.) was in his custody, and by that the cell was made subordinate to the abbey of St. Alban; and he challenged the earl to shew any deed, or record, to exclude the abbey, or to limit the authority of visitor to himself or his family. The earl, being unable to do this, submitted his own pretended authority, and acknowledged the right of the abbey; but not without swearing by the lance of God (being a great armed knight), that the abbot's name should, for the future, be called *Mate-felon*.

R bert the
18th abbot.

Robert was on very good terms with his countryman, pope Adrian IV. and, being at Rome one summer, (a journey, which, in those days, seems to have been only a summer jaunt for the clergy), he solicited his holiness to enter on some measures to make the monks of Ely forbear their boasting that they were possessed of the true relics of St. Alban. The pope, accordingly, directed a commission to three certain bishops, to make strict enquiry; who, going to Ely, and shewing their credentials, the abbot and convent made choice of twelve of their oldest and most discreet brethren, to discuss this *arduous affair*. When the bishops had first exacted an oath, to examine the truth and obey it, otherwise they should suffer suspension and the censures of the church, they protested, with unanimous consent, 'that they had been deceived by a pious fraud; that they had perpetrated sacrilege, and were wholly without one bone of St. Alban: that, with regard to the saint's cassock, or rough coat, they believed themselves to have been deceived, through the like pious zeal; for, by reason only of the length of time, such a thing could not then exist; and that Germanus, when he discovered the bones of the saint, found them not wrapped in a cassock, but in a pall or cloak; and had left them in it, as he had found them: that Offa, likewise, who 344 years after Germanus, had raised the bones from the earth, did not find the said cassock: but the said pall or cloak he had reserved whole, and unhurt, in his church, in testimony of so great a miracle.' With this confession, the abbot and monks of St. Alban declared themselves satisfied.

Pope Alexander the Third had summoned a general council to meet at Tours in France; and, among the rest, the prelates of England set forth to attend his holiness, and consult for the benefit of the universal church. With them appeared the venerable abbot Robert, a man esteemed, at that time, the most eloquent, and the best instructed, in all divine and human laws. To him was assigned, by Hyacinth, the cardinal deacon, the first seat above all the English abbots, according to the privilege granted by pope Adrian; with

Robert the 18th. abbot. with a charge to keep and preserve the said seat, as one of his servants. And, lest he might be too much puffed up by his elevation and honour, he was to consider himself as door-keeper to the pope. In the writ of privilege, the tenor of the grant runs thus; "that, as Alban was distinguished as the first martyr in England, so let the abbot of his monastery be ranked "the first in place and dignity." But the abbot of St. Edmundsbury, named Hugo, was sadly mortified at this pre-eminence; and, on the night before the day of assembling, he got possession of this first seat, and, together with his attendants, sat up therein, driving out, by violence, a servant of abbot Roberts, who had been sent to secure it: in the morning, abbot Hugo, fearing that the pope or cardinals would put some affront on him, and depose him from his seat, offered the court of the pontiff a present of sixty marks; promising that his brother Hamon, a monk, should be detained as a hostage until the money was paid. Robert was unwilling to appeal to the king's court for redress, because Henry had forbid all the prelates to bring any complaint, on any matter, into his courts. But, in the presence of all assembled, he laid before the pope the violence and affront committed by Hugo; and, arrayed in all his pontifical habits, seated himself next to Hugo, and before all the other abbots.

Hugo did this in justification of the honour of his martyr, who had been a king; but it proved of little advantage to him to assert and vindicate the royal martyr; for, beside the charges of the journey, &c. his presents and liberalities to the pope, the cardinals, and court, cost him very dear. Now, while Hugo was supporting his own affected honour and rank, Robert was turning his disgrace and affront to a public benefit; for, under the influence of this grievance, he offered many petitions to the pope, which his holiness granted without the least hesitation. One was, that he would be pleased to confirm that exemption from the bishop of Lincoln, which Pope Adrian had granted to his monastery, and to the fifteen churches (a) under its jurisdiction; another contained some advantages for the cell at Hatfield; and the third contained some privileges in favour of the holy virgins dwelling at Sopwell.

Robert, on his return home, was received with all the pomp and solemnity of a procession; and, approaching the high altar, he made an offering of two silver basons, value five marks; and two mantles,

(a) These were all that at this time belonged to the abbey. The other six, which constitute the arch-deaconry of St. Alban, were later acquisitions. It is not clear which were the fifteen here entitled to the privilege.

adorned before and behind with gold fringe. He caused to be made a very handsome censer of silver, for burning frankincense. He purchased two garments, or cloaks, of the finest imperial purple; of which one was made into a cope, value one hundred shillings, and the other was converted into a mantle. He caused also to be made a small image of the Virgin Mary, with its attributes, to be placed over the altar. He caused many books to be transcribed; "more" says my author, "than can be mentioned." He repaired the coffin and shrine of the saint, which, in the time of abbot Ralph, had been broken and stripped of its ornaments, in order to purchase their estate at Brentfield; and furnished it, as before, with much ornament of gold, silver, and precious stone. He bestowed much expence in improving the buildings of the monastery; for, he built anew the chapter-house from the ground; and the grand room called the King's Parlour; and a chapel to the honour of St. Nicolas; and all that side of the cloister which stood in the *front* of the chapter-house. He erected also a granary, a landry, a larder, and a long stable; and appointed that a lamp should be burning in the stable every night. He built, moreover, two sunny rooms (a), such as were in great request in those days, and which tended to soften the rigor of the winter weather.

But Robert, with all these virtues, stands charged with some faults; although, says *M. Paris*, they were very slight ones; for, he gave to his brother, named Ralph, the estate at Syret, without the consent, or even privity, of the body. And he gave to William Basset, and his heirs, the whole vill of Thorpe, for the annual rent of thirty shillings; although the father of the said William never had, or claimed, any inheritance therein. He gave also to the monks of Bermondsey the tithes, and all parochial rights of a farm called Bridehorn; with this single condition, that they should observe an anniversary day to his memory. These two last contracts he procured, by earnest solicitation, to be confirmed by the body. And, in a dispute with Roger de Meriden about the lands at Bradway, he yielded to the claims of the said Roger, not knowing the true title which the monastery had, and suffering himself to be deceived by the testimony, upon oath, of some of the dependents and soldiers of the said claimant, who, according to truth, and the charter of Henry I. had no kind of right.

At length, Robert, having governed the abbey fifteen years and four months, departed this life, being afflicted with a pleurisy. He

(a) *Solaria*, since called *Sollars*.

Robert the 18th abbot. died the 20th of October, 1166; and his funeral was attended by Gilbert Foliot bishop of London, Lawrence abbot of Westminster, and Simon the prior of this house. He was interred in the new chapter-house, at the feet of abbot Paul, who was the first and most distinguished person here buried, as appears by his grave-stone, "in which," saith my author, "he is represented as habited in his pontific robes." "But," continues he, "at rebuilding this house, the bodies of those "venerable men were indecently disturbed, and thrown again pro- "miscuously into the earth."

At the decease of Robert, the abbey was confiscated; that is, I imagine, the temporalities reverted to the king; but the whole care thereof was committed, by precept from the king's justice, the earl of Leicester, to the prior, and to the steward named Adam, and others of the brethren. The church was so much burdened with debt, that, when an account was drawn out, and settled by the king's officers (I suppose of the Exchequer, who had the care of the confiscation), the debt amounted to six hundred marks, much of this owing to Christians, but more to Jews. But this irregularity, and bad state of their revenue, was easily excused; in consideration of the numerous and arduous difficulties which they had been involved in, and through which their abbot had carried them with perfect success. He bore also a special affection towards his relations and countrymen; and had conferred on them many gifts and presents; in particular, the lands of Gorham, as they were now called, together with all their product and increase, he caused to be confirmed unto the grantee his relation, with certain enlargements, that were not strictly lawful.

Symond the 19th abbot. On Robert's death, the prior and monks petitioned the king for leave to elect a successor; but the king kept the vacancy open for four months and more; and at length, after much intreaty, he wrote to the bishop of London, Gilbert Foliot, directing him to go down; and that, "having procured a nomination of three persons, he should "make report to the king of their true characters and abilities, and of "the real state of the monastery; that he (the king) might choose "whom he liked best." This the bishop performed; and the king appointed *Symond* the prior to succeed as abbot. In June, he received the form of benediction from the bishop, and, being invested in the proper habits, was enthroned. This was a new mode of election. But at this time the contest ran high between the king and Becket; and this was one of the instances, wherein Henry determined to shew Becket, that he could make abbots and bishops, and give them investiture,

titute, without the interference of the arch-bishop ; or of the pope, for ^{Symond the} whom Becket contended. ^{19th abbot.}

Symond was an Englishman by birth ; a privilege which three or four of his predecessors could not boast. He had been bred up from his infancy in the monastery, and was well versed in all the rules, usages, and customs, practised therein. He was well accomplished in letters, and the learning then most esteemed ; and of excellent morals and sobriety. He took great pains to have plenty of good books. It has been observed, that there was in the monastery a certain apartment, called the *Scriptorium*, used for the scribes and copyists : this having been long neglected, and the use of it perverted, Symond repaired it ; and employed three or four scribes constantly, and made some addition to their salary : by this means he provided a great number of very fair and reputable books, and among others, the Old and New Testament much embellished. He caused a place to be made for these books, called the Almonry, opposite the tomb of Roger the Hermit, somewhere within the body of the church ; for, it is to be observed, that, among all the rooms and buildings belonging to the abbey, there was none called the LIBRARY : the scarcity of books rendered this unnecessary ; and, from their being kept in holes and corners, they soon decayed, and furnished new employment for the scribes. He likewise ordained, that all future abbots should employ *one* scribe at least.

This abbot had no such contests with the great and powerful as Robert had. But his whole time seems to have been spent in procuring gold and silver, and rich cups and utensils ; and in applying the gold and silver, together with many precious stones, in decorating the shrine of the saint. And herein he employed a very excellent artist, one master John, a goldsmith ; who, in a very few years, so enriched and embellished the shrine, that *M. Paris*, who lived near one hundred years after, says, he had never seen one more splendid and noble.

It is to be understood, that in those days there was no screen at the top of the choir, that the great altar stood where the rails and table now stand, and the shrine was placed in what is now the choir ; so that it was all open, even from Cuthbert's screen, to the view of the whole choir and congregation. Symond caused the shrine to be a little elevated, for a better view, and to appear directly before the eye of the priest who was celebrating mass ; whose place it was to stand and kneel with his back to the people, and on the west side of the altar. This position of the shrine was not only the most splendid to the eye of the beholder, but was intended to raise and elevate the devotion of

Symon the
19th abbot.

the priest; and to this purpose, also, was intended the decollation of Alban, which was painted on the wall opposite. The shrine was in form somewhat resembling an altar-tomb, but rising, with a lofty canopy over it supported on pillars; and was intended to represent the saint lying in great state; and thus to receive the homage and adorations of all such as believe in saints and in their efficacious prayers. The inside contained a coffin, wherein had been deposited the bones of Alban by abbot Geoffrey. This was inclosed in another case, which, on the two sides, was overlaid with figures cast in gold and silver, shewing the chief acts of Alban's life, in work that was highly raised and embossed. At the head, which was toward the east, was placed a huge crucifixion, with a figure of Mary on one side, and of St. John on the other, ornamented with a row of very splendid jewels. At the feet, which were towards the west, and in front of the choir, was placed an image of the Virgin, holding her son in her bosom, seated on a throne: the work seemingly of cast gold highly embossed, and enriched with precious stones and very costly bracelets. The four pillars which supported the canopy, and stood one at each corner, were shaped in resemblance like towers, with apertures to represent windows, and all of plate gold, supporting the roof or canopy, whose inside was covered with crystal stones.

Such was the shrine or monument of the holy Alban; and which, in the notions of those times, was calculated to excite devotion in the beholder. And, indeed, when the worship of saints made a great part of their religion, it was natural to set off the monument of the saint with all possible splendor; since this, with ignorant minds, would inspire a degree of awe and astonishment, excite an idea of the saint's power and interest in heaven, and certainly tended to make the poor votary more submissive to the masters of the saint. But it was a part of that mystery of iniquity which Christ and his apostles foretold would work: and now was the time when it drew near its highest perfection; when churchmen, now approaching to the greatest pitch of power, had instituted and established a rival jurisdiction, and were ever combating and controuling the civil authority.

The quarrel, between Henry II. and Becket, was nothing more than a struggle which should be superior, the *Crown* or the *Mitre*; and which dependent and subservient. Ever since the Conqueror had cherished the clergy and church, in order to secure his new acquisitions, they had gone on to obtain more and more privileges; William had founded new bishoprics, enlarged and amplified the old, created new officers under them, and enabled the clergy to rule all his subjects: and,

in the space of one century, they had grown independent of the Crown, and possessed privileges that were not only adverse to the usual laws and rules of civil government, but even dangerous to monarchy itself, whenever the monarch ventured to oppose them. This temporal power was greatly strengthened by the doctrines which they had taught: transubstantiation, the worship of the dead, and invocation of saints, in order to establish a pretended interest with Heaven; the necessity of confession, and resignation of all private will and opinion; and, to complete their tyranny over kings and civil powers, the pretended lawfulness to *dethrone*, or to withdraw all *allegiance* and *duty* from them.

Symond the
19th abbot,

In this summit of church power, but with a view to reduce or restrain its exorbitancy, did Henry place his chancellor Becket, by appointing him arch-bishop of Canterbury; being first ordained only deacon, and now, for this express purpose, priest. And, at first, the conduct of Becket seemed assenting to this plan; but he changed, and, instead of a moderate governor, became a most zealous champion and defender of the church. It is unnecessary to say more of the persecution he suffered, his exile, his undutiful carriage to the king, and his tragical end at last: but this event sufficiently shews the excess of power possessed by the clergy, and of the enmity which the state and its governors must conceive against them on that account.

Among the fautors and encouragers of Becket, our abbot Symond was not the least; though there is no fact on record that specially notes his courage, or his insolence in the contest, except this, which I will relate: Becket, after a proscription of seven years, was permitted to return to England: and he thought proper to go to Woodstock, to pay his duty to prince Henry, just then crowned and associated with his father in the throne. The arch-bishop had incensed the king afresh, by refusing to absolve those bishops who had been excommunicated: and, while he was on his journey, the king forbade him to proceed any farther: the arch-bishop turned back, and reposed himself at his manor of Harwes (a), about seven miles from this abbey; and sent for abbot Symond, to console him on his misfortunes and distresses. Here Symond passed some days with him; and, within fifteen days after their departure, Becket was slain by four ruffian knights, at the foot of an altar, on the 29th of December 1170. The death of such a man often drew pious lamentations from Symond, who grieved "that he was not worthy to have been involved in so glorious a toil;

(a) This, I believe, is Hayes near Uxbridge.

Symond the
19th abbot.

“ nor had ever had the honour to be maimed, or mutilated, or beheaded, in so noble a cause.”

This abbot prepared many ornaments for the church and the service; such as very fine cups, well wrought in gold, and enriched with precious stones: to which the king added another exceeding rich cup, to hold the vessel that contained, what they called, the real body of Christ. He caused also to be made a very large cross, covered with plates of gold; which was borne between two other crosses on the day of the Lord's passion. The chapel of Cuthbert, built by abbot Richard, he now caused to be consecrated. He made another very uncommon vessel resembling a writing-desk (*scrinium*), covered with plates of gold, and rising in the top in ribs or circles of gold, wrought with figures and stories of the blessed Jesus. This contained a small chest, in which was deposited the true body: and the whole vessel was carried about with great solemnity, and, at certain times, worshipped with all the tokens of adoration by the whole convent; ‘to shew,’ saith my author, ‘how much that body ought to be revered and adored by men, which Christ gave up to be scourged, crucified, and buried in the earth (a).’

One is quite at a loss to understand how the Saviour's body, mortified as it was, could be justly represented by a great gilded box, said to contain something, which the bearers pretended was the real body. Nor can one see by what logic the people could be thence reasoned into a sense of the merits of Christ's body or death; or how the sight of this glittering vessel could raise any true devotion or reverence for the Saviour; but it served to dazzle and astonish, and thus prepare men to be more submissive and credulous; it awed the vulgar, and raised a credit or opinion, that priests and monks, who abounded in gold and riches, must be favoured of Heaven.

Another principal event of Symond's time was the discovery of the body of *Amphibalus*, the master and instructor of Alban. This great event is related by *M. Paris* as having come to pass by the miraculous appearance of Alban to one Robert, a lay person of the town; to whom he discovered, that, if they would dig on Redburn Green, they

(a) *Berenger*, who was one of the most learned divines of his age, was a principal of the school at Tours, and afterwards arch-bishop of Angers, suffered much persecution for asserting and teaching the *spiritual* presence only, and not the *corporeal*, of the Saviour, in the Eucharist. He had derived this opinion from the writings of *John Scotus Erigena*, who lived in the *ninth* century. But Berenger was persecuted for this doctrine, even when the church of Rome had not attained to any precise and settled doctrines concerning the presence. *Moss. Ecc. Hist.* 11 Cent.

should

should find the remains of Amphibalus, and many of his fellow-sufferers. The abbot obeyed the direction, and was as successful in the discovery as if he had known by tradition the place of their burial. And with great solemnity the bones of this pious man and his companions, or of some others that had been deposited on that green, were brought to the abbey in 1178; and, to gain credit to the authenticity of the fact, wonderful cures were said to have been wrought among the sick, lame, and blind, at the place. The particular infirmities are related by *M. Paris*; but they are plainly copied from the miracles of Jesus.

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This religious abbot at length died in 1183, having ruled the monastery fifteen years. But it was discovered, that he left his abbey in debt above six hundred marks to the Jews; and, to others, more than two hundred. Aaron, the Jew, came down, and with great pride and ostentation made his boast, ‘that *he* had built that noble shrine; and that all the grand entertainment of the place had been furnished out of *his* money.’ Symond bore a very carnal affection towards his relations, and had enriched many with the goods of the crucifix: and, beside knights and nobles, he gave presents to many who only pretended to be his kinsmen; and for that purpose committed grievous waste on the timber and woods of the abbey. He was succeeded in the abbacy by Warren or Waring.

Warren was descended from an ordinary family in the town of Cambridge, and had early acquired great fame and reverence for his learning and piety; and was no less remarkable for the accomplishments of his person. While a secular, he went with his brother Matthew to Italy, and studied physic at Salernum, which at that time was a renowned medical school. But, while there, the two brothers, together with a nephew named Warren, and two associates, who were of Salernum, formed a resolution of entering as monks into the abbey of St. Alban: which wish and intent they did each of them accomplish, except the nephew. And he, still continuing a secular, kept a school in the town, lived in good fame and character, and died in a habitation very near to the nuns’ house at Sopwell. His school was in such reputation, that it was scarcely surpassed by any other in the kingdom at that time, either in the number of scholars or in the utility of the science there taught. And it had this testimony from that learned doctor, called Alexander Nequam (or Neckam), who had ruled the same many years before young Warren took it, and who was at this time the director and governor of the great priory school at Dunstable. This Warren, the nephew, applied himself much to the study of
the

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Warren the 20th abbot. the decretals and church law, being supplied with books by his two uncles. These three men acquired great interest and esteem among persons of all ranks : and were termed, by the envious, *the threefold cord that could not be broken.*

The election of Warren the elder to the abbot's chair had passed with the universal consent of the convent ; except that of William Martel, the sacrist, who himself aspired to that dignity, but with much indecent conduct ; saying, that Warren (having a defect in his eye) was quite blind ; ‘ that he was of mean origin, and born of that low tribe called Dealers in Salt ; and that, if he should be chosen, he would, with Matthew his brother, tread under foot the whole convent ; nor must any man dare to contradict them.’ Warren ruled the abbey twelve years ; and the most remarkable of his deeds was, his founding the cell and church of St. Mary de Pratis. He is said to have done this at the admonition of a man, born at Waldon, who pretended that Amphibalus had appeared to him, and requested ‘ that some place might be dedicated to his honour, for that he had been the instructor and converter of the great Alban.’ Warren complied so far as to found a cell, with proper offices, and a church, with chaplain and clerk, for the use and habitation of thirteen poor leprous women. Its situation procured its name *de pratis* ; for, it is described as being placed at the extremity of the plowed land, and adjoining to the *meadows* of Kingsbury, with its offices on each side of the high-way (a). The person whom he placed over this society, (if it could be called such, when they were shut up from all communication with others, and limited to a small distance from their house), was John de Waldon, the son of him who had been honoured with the vision of Amphibalus ; and a brother and monk. The allowance for the maintenance of this house was a certain quantity of winter-corn, and of malt, per week ; with cloaths, and a small portion of money, from the Steward of the monastery. Amphibalus had signified in the vision, that this cell should be built in the place where his body had rested, when Symond removed the same from Redburn, in 1178. And this induced Warren to honour it by this beneficent act of humanity to the wretched sufferers of that incurable disease, the leprosy. But, that Amphibalus might not complain, the abbot caused the holy relics of that man, and his companions, to be re-

(a) This place also received its name, not only from its situation, but in imitation of a place so called near Rouen (*St. Mary de Prez*), and where the empress Maud was buried in 1167. *Hoveden* 289. So natural was it for Normans to transfer names thence to new places here, on which they founded new settlements.

moved with great solemnity, on the 8th of the calends of July 1186, from the place where Symond had deposited them, and to be inclosed in a new shrine richly adorned with gold and silver. Symond had placed these relics on the right side of the great altar, in one coffin; but now Warren gave to each of them a separate inclosure, placing the shrine of Amphibalus close to the wall, on the right hand of the great altar and next to the upper pier, near the rood-loft(a) on which are represented, in rude carving, the sufferings of Amphibalus. He placed the relics of his three companions in other coffins; and near the same he placed the relics of the six other co-martyrs, which had been found with him, and all in separate and distinct boxes, or coffins.

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The king, Henry II. came down to the abbey with a large train of attendants, for entertainment, and this seems to have happened early in the time of Warren, and to have been the consequence of the interest he had with the court. The king desired to see the monks and body assembled together; and accordingly they met, and took their respective places in the chapter-house. When the king entered, he seated himself in the chair of the abbot, in the midst of the room, with the abbot on his right hand, and the bishop of Lincoln on his left; he then bowed to one side and the other, very graciously, in way of salutation, intreating them to ‘pray with incessant prayers, for the safety of himself, and queen, and children, and also for the state of the realm.’ To this the whole convent most devoutly consented, acknowledging that they were bound to perform this duty by every tie of gratitude. Then Walter of Constance, the bishop of Lincoln, rose up, and, addressing himself to the king, said, that he begged leave ‘to prefer a complaint to his Majesty; which was, that he was greatly injured, and the church of Lincoln shamefully mutilated, by cutting off from it so noble a member as this monastery. With your permission, I must move a question against this abbot. Whatever my predecessor did, who was simple and easy, he was circumvented in the same: the world well knows, that this church is subject to the church of Lincoln; and, whatever hath been done in error, it is fit and expedient that the same be recalled.’ The abbot Warren, hearing this, laid his bare hand on the knee of the king, without rising, and said, ‘Your majesty is the pledge of my peace, the witness and mediator of the compromise, which was begun and confirmed between us.’ The king arose in some warmth, and exclaimed,

(a) It seems as if this rood-loft had been built at this time.

Warren the 20th abbot. ‘ By the eyes of God ! I was present at the agreement. What is it, my lord of Lincoln, that you would attempt ? do you think these things were done in secret ? I myself, and the most chosen men of the realm were present : and what was then done is ratified by writings the most incontestible, and confirmed by the testimony of the nobles. The determination stands good, and whoever sets himself to combat this abbot and monastery combats me. What seek you ? to touch the pupil of mine eye ? ’ On which the bishop found himself thunderstruck, and uttered not a word more. Nor was any question on that subject ever moved again : and, from that day to this, Lincoln hath never made any claims ; but, at the dissolution, when the power of the abbot was abrogated and annulled, all the places, or churches, under his jurisdiction and constituting the arch-deaconry of this church, were, together with all the churches in the liberty of St. Alban, annexed to London diocese.

I relate this event, in order to shew, on what footing these great churchmen stood with their sovereign in those days ; and as a proof of the esteem the king entertained for this abbot and his monastery. The king had come down to be entertained ; and it was the custom of the sovereigns, both before and after him, to go down at the great festivals to some abbey, and there keep their holidays : but he was well acquainted with abbot Warren (a), and would not suffer any obstruction or diminution of honour to his host. And the consequence of this little broil was, that Walter was the next year made archbishop of Rouen ; and Warren set on foot many innovations, changes, and amendments, in the government of the monastery ; one of which was, the founding the hospital of St. Mary de Pratis, as above-mentioned, and assigning thereto some of the ancient revenue, which, the discontented said, was almost sacrilege ; for, it was converting the sacred revenue to lay-uses, and rendering that common, which had been hallowed and given in alms. Another injunction was, that, whereas every brother, or monk, had at their death been buried in the plainest and least expensive manner, being only laid bare in the earth, for the future they should be interred in coffins made of stone. This was considered as done out of pique to William Martel, the sacrist, who had opposed the election of Warren ; for, it was a part of the duty and function of the sacrist to provide for the funeral of every member of the convent, and this order would put him to great expence.

(a) *Erat autem regi charissimus, propter liberalitatem et dapfilitatem. M. Paris.*

He enjoined also, that a day of anniversary feasting should be set apart, in memory of their deceased steward, Adam, who had been a faithful servant for many years, and had procured them the church of Suthbury. Adam, on bringing this church to the possessions of the abbey, had procured that a part of its revenue, which was more than 1000*l.* a year, should be expended in gifts and feasting, for the souls of his father and mother, and for the souls of all the parents of all the monks, that is, as a dole, or recompence, to the receivers, who should pray for the salvation of those souls. The remainder of this revenue was now ordered to be expended in feeding an hundred poor persons at the gate, on the anniversary of Adam, with bread and ale, and an hundred more by the steward of the monk's kitchen; and in providing at the same time a sufficient and splendid repast for the whole convent in the refectory. Warren also appointed an anniversary for the soul of his predecessor Geoffrey, in which the treasurer of the church should relieve an hundred poor persons with bread and ale, and one mess of broth; and all others who might be present, should have half a loaf each, a quarter of corn being baked for the purpose.

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Warren granted many indulgences to his monks, by way of mitigating the rigor of their order; for, whereas it had been a custom for the monks to be blooded about four or five times a year (a), the operation to be performed after dinner in the summer, and the patients to abstain from the refectory, and from converse, and from holy worship; he ordained, that they should undergo this operation in the morning both in the summer and in winter, should dine in the refectory, and then go (with the other monks, to whom also it was a liberty now first granted) into the strangers parlour, and there join company and converse for one hour; in which time the servitors and attendants were dining.

He ordered also, that they should all go together into the dormitory, at night, before the brethren should be summoned by the bell

(a) This ceremony is described by Cardinal *du Fresne*, in his Account of the Order of St. Victor, in these words, 'five times in the year let there be a general losing of blood; beyond which number, without great danger of extreme weakness, the liberty shall not be granted: and so many times are necessary (to be observed at certain fixed periods), that no persons may require the same at an improper season: the *first* is in September, the *second* before Advent, the *third* before Lent, the *fourth* after Easter, the *fifth* after Pentecost. Three days shall be employed in the rite; after which they shall come to matins, or morning service, and join the convent; and on the fourth they shall receive absolution in a chapter.' This rite is enjoined in the rule of the order of *Sempringham*; and in the *Chronicon of Trudo*, c. 9; and in the *Ufus Ord. Cisterciensium*, c. 90.

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to arise for the midnight service, *Completorium*: and that those, who did rise for that solemnity, should meet in the strangers parlour, and converse for one hour, or so long as the keeper of that room should give leave, before they went into the choir; but not longer, or later, than the curfew (a). He added, likewise, to some, a leave of absence from the midnight service or an indulgence of absence the next day. The matins were a service in the church at three o'clock in the morning, or in the summer at break of day: and it had been a constant custom for these bleeding monks to absent themselves for the first night after the operation, but to attend on the second. The abbot now granted them absence on the second night, with injunctions to attend the third, at all canonical hours; unless some principal festival, or double service, should intervene on the second.

This practice of bleeding the monks did not become necessary through high living, or to prevent a plethora and carry off any intemperance; for, they lived chiefly on roots and bread, and but rarely on fish and fowl: they, however, drank plentifully of ale and malt-liquor. But, in the physical system of those days, bleeding was deemed a remedy for all disorders, and especially for a low and weak constitution: and beside, they placed so much religious merit in a pale aspect and a mortified habit of body, that they thought a florid complexion, and healthy looks, quite inconsistent with religion and grace; and such appearance created a suspicion of great sin and criminality in the bearer.

It was the duty of the sacrist to regulate and direct all matters relative to the fasts, and the observance thereof; and he was now ordered to allow moderate refreshment to such as could not wait till the late hour the body sat down to dinner on fast-days; but to manage in such a manner, that the whole should assemble at the great mass. In Lent, the daily practice was, that no man tasted a morsel until after the great mass, which began at three o'clock; and then he might take a little food, and assemble with the convent, at six, to the vespers. But, as it had ever been complained, that they had but one hour (for, the great mass lasted two hours) for relieving their fast, and for necessary ease and refreshment, the abbot allowed that some should stay longer at their repast, provided that others attended vespers; and that, if the convent abstained from fish, which they did often on fast-days, a man should be absolved from the injunction of abstinence, and be allowed to eat what he could get. When any person had taken his

repast, he should quit the refectory instantly, and betake himself to his solitary duties, while the body was dining; and that, if any monk abode or staid in the refectory until the sound of the bell was heard, (which was probably a summons to the servants, &c.), that monk should not be permitted to enter the parlour; but go into the church, and remain there solitary and silent.

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It was contrary to the rule and law of their institution to eat flesh meat, except in the infirmary; but, because there were some who concealed their weak and low condition, although they looked extremely pale and wasted, and wished to keep out of the infirmary, to them the abbot gave leave to eat meat, but it must be in the gate-house, and probably with the porter. And, even in the infirmary, no one touched meat, unless in the extremity of his disease, (which, as it arose from very low diet, here met its suitable remedy), or when, if recovering, the master of the infirmary, authorized for speaking the truth, affirmed that meat was necessary. He directed every one to enter the infirmary, as soon as he complained of sickness; and the offerings made at the altar of St. Peter(a), at the north end of the town, were set apart for the purpose of finding medicines, advice, &c.; so that no one, who should undertake that duty, might hereafter plead an impossibility or defect of means: and this appointment of the offerings continued till the time of *John of Hertford*, the 23d abbot, who, in 1253, endowed a vicarage in this church, and also in that of Saint Michael of Kingsbury; when the offerings and certain portions of the tithe were allotted to the maintenance of the vicar, and no recompence made to the monastic body.

He permitted any of the monks, who seemed to be declining in their health, to go and recreate themselves at Redburn; lest a continual round of duty and confinement in the cloister, without any variation, might breed utter and irrecoverable sickness: but they were obliged to this condition, that, if flesh-meat was proper and necessary, they should eat such as their servants might provide for themselves, and they (the servants) should eat the conventual dinner. He allowed the monks, on fast-days, to sleep after dinner, if any thought proper; whereas, the custom had been, to lie down to rest at noon. But it is necessary also to mention, that it was a custom with Warren, to send

(a) Abbot Geoffrey had appointed St. Peter's, and all its appurtenances, to the perpetual use of the infirmary and refectory; with annual denunciations, &c. &c. see page 55: But, from this fresh grant of Warren's, it would appear, that, after a lapse of 50 years, the threats were forgotten, and the *Infirmary's* portion otherwise applied.

Warren the away to Tinmouth, or some distant cell, any monk whom he dis-
 20th abbot. liked; under pretence of its being necessary for his health, or for
 his farther progress in the ways of righteousness and salvation.

He remitted much of their duty in the choir, by shortening many parts of the service, and especially that service on private days, from All Saints to Easter, in which they were accustomed to sing *thirty* psalms: this service was so tiresome to some, that they babbled it over as quick as possible, and others were ready, in the mean time, to nod: he therefore divided it into two services, with an interval; and, instead of some other service, or set of prayers, used before, he substituted the seven penitential psalms.

He made some alterations in their dress; injoining, that instead of high-shoes, fastened with a thong, they should wear boots, and those made of the leather called *Bafan*, or in present vulgar speech, *Bafils*, that is, calf-skin, tanned; whereas, their former shoes were made of bullock's hide, and tanned at more expence: the reason of this change was, that they might be more ready and expeditious in coming to the service in the morning, and might not entangle themselves with their neighbour in walking; and, that they might appear with clean hands: these boots still retained the ancient roundness and wide form of the shoes. He ordered them, also, to wear their under garments in such a manner, that they might have their arms more at liberty, and no longer be confined by sleeves. He directed that no servitor, or attendant in the refectory, should wait without a good frock; for, before, they were so ill-clothed, that their appearance approached very near to nakedness: and, observing that the noviciates wore only a frock with a hood sewed to it, he ordered, that, as soon as the young monk received the tonsure, he should put on the whole dress and habit of a *professed*. He ordained also, that no secular, except a bishop, should ever dine with the monks.

He gave to his church a certain habit of a purple colour, and of great value, being adorned with rows of very costly pearl, and painted, or embroidered, with the figures of birds looking behind them; and ordained, that on his anniversary, or day of his death, the officiating priest should be habited in this garment, and offer up a salutary victim (I suppose in prayer) for his soul. When he perceived his end approaching, he bequeathed to his successor one hundred marks for rebuilding the west front of his church.

It was in this abbot's time, that King Richard (*Cœur de Lion*) was taken prisoner, on his return from the Holy Land; and he had sent an order to his Council, to demand, in his name, from all the monasteries,

nafteries, bishops, and clergy of England, all their silver cups, in order to make a sum for his ransom : the abbot then sent to the king two hundred marks of silver ; being unwilling to impoverish his abbey, or mutilate the splendor of its appearance.

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Warren ruled the abbey near 12 years ; but had always shewn himself an imperious, self-willed, man, full of his own conceits, and never listening to any advice or admonition of others, however friendly : and, by the help of his brother Matthew, the prior, who was of a very suspicious character, he offended many of the best nobility and great personages, who had concerns with the abbey, and pursued them with a most unrelenting hatred. This conduct rendered his monastery so thin, that he had noviciates of *five* years old ; and the few that remained in the convent never durst contradict him. He was much blamed for founding the church and hospital of St. Mary de Pratis, as doing an injury to the revenue of his abbey : and the indulgences, which he gave his monks, were said to be with a view of keeping them in good temper and compliance. But he was famous for doing irreparable mischief in the woods of the abbey ; and every Sunday he kept a kind of exchequer, or revenue office, to which resorted the foresters and others, who sold or bought the wood, in order to settle their accompts, &c. And yet, from this supply, he never added to the ornaments of the church, or to the buildings of the monastery ; nor, indeed, did he keep up or repair those of the farms and manors : but, with great assiduity, and many liberal donations, did he study to recommend himself to king Richard and queen Eleanor ; as if that had constituted the sum of religious duty and of good fame. Whomsoever he found speaking of him with obloquy or reprehending his excesses, these persons were soon hurried away to some distant cell, where many suffered a kind of exile, and, enduring great bitterness of mind, finished a wretched life, with dreadful imprecations on Warren ; and chiefly, because they found themselves constrained to break those vows of obedience, and act contrary to those promises and professions, which they had made on admission. Warren died in 1195.

The indulgences, if they may be so called, which this abbot shewed to his monks, give full proof, in how abject a subjection to the superior they lived, and also, what an austere and irksome life they were forced to lead : the service of the choir employed them eight hours in the twenty-four, namely, two hours at six in the morning or at day-

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day-break, two more at noon, two at six in the evening, and two more at midnight. They had, indeed, eight hours for rest, but that was much broken, and interrupted by frequent vigils in the night-season; and the remaining eight, which we may suppose spent in recreation, or in pleasant company and agreeable discourse, seem to have been quite void of all these pleasures: if they spent these hours in solitude, it is probable they were given to rest or indolence; or, if they chose to refresh themselves in the open air, it is probable that this could not be done without leave; and then, it was enjoined every man, who sought for air and exercise, to employ himself in the garden with the spade or the hoe. Every thing like innocent mirth or amusement was excluded these walls, in which a repetition of prayers and perpetual singing of psalms were deemed devotion and worship, and were holden equivalent to sound faith and to pure morals.

The diet of the monks was another austerity, that, in these days, would not be submitted to by the most indigent. Fasting twice a week is reckoned a hardship now, by even those who are ever full, and fare sumptuously every day; but it was a severe trial and mortification to men, who fared very scantily at all times, and may be said never to have a belly-full of good substantial food; for, the little flesh they had was generally turned into broth, and the fish allowed was but in small quantities: eggs boiled hard, and a portion of roots and herbs, with bread and ale, constituted the generality of their meals. And here it is to be observed, that the roots and herbs were but of the most ordinary kind, since, in the days I speak of, very few of the present esculent plants were known in England. They seem, indeed, on some occasions, to have had a portion of wine(a), and were, at times, indulged in the flesh of birds and the feathered tribe, which seem, in those days, to have been more plenty than beef and mutton, and to have made a considerable part of the feasts, even in later times.

The dress, or attire, of the men had as little in it to excite pride, as their diet could gluttony; or, rather, was as well calculated to mortify and humble them: a coarse long gown of black, with some ordinary under-garments, and beneath all a hair shirt(b), is a dress, that,

(a) Probably of their own making.

(b) This is understood to be the garment worn, among the Jews, by the penitent and the mournful; and is the same as the Septuagint translators term *Σακκος*, and St. John in the 6th chapter of the Apocalypse; and which the Latin interpreters have rendered *Cilicium*; being made of the hair, or wool, thorn from the goats, and woven in Cilicia, where this invention took its rise, and continued long in practice, as is affirmed by

that, beside being ever painful and working like a thorn in the flesh, ^{Warren the 20th abbot.} was a constant incumbrance to the legs and arms, in every motion and gesture: a bald head, and with no covering, in the severest cold, but a dirty cowl, or hood, hanging on the shoulders, is something very humiliating to all persons, who are sensible how much the manly character is raised by the air and ornament of the head.

Their life was passed without much instruction, either in public or in private; for, the sermons were not, as now, lessons of faith or good morals, but panegyrics on some saint, with an account of the strange miracles, performed at the tomb of some pious departed mortal: and books were so scarce, and so few persons capable of reading them, that no instruction could easily be had in private. The sole business of these monks was, to chaunt and exhibit the *public* worship of God in pomp and splendor; and their *private* adoration of him was in self-denial and abasement.

On a view of their life, what persons, it may be said, could be induced to embrace it? and here, though I will allow, that parents might often breed up their children with a view to it, and that many reasons of prudence and policy prompted the younger branches of families to enter, yet I may safely venture to say, that far the greater number took on them this kind of life when they were capable of judging, and that they did it through choice, and after much serious consideration: it may then be answered to this questionist, “Alas! “thou favourest more of the things that belong unto men, than “of those that belong unto God.” For, these men did it out of principle, and in conformity to the notions and doctrines of the times, with great sincerity of mind, and the most pure sentiments of piety. All their books and doctors of theology taught, that men came into the world with a monstrous burden of sin: it

by Varro *de Re Rusticâ, in fine*. Sometimes it was made of camel’s hair; but always of the coarsest sort, and woven with a very hard coarse thread: And this was the raiment of John the Baptist, as being most suitable to his penitential character and mission. The English translators term it *sackcloth*, as if it was made of hemp; but it is probable this name was affixed to the garment from its resembling a sack, and being, like that, narrow and straight.

Virgil alludes to this in the *3d Georgic*, thus,

Cinyphii tondent hirci, setasque comantes,
Usum in castrorum, miseris velamina nautis.

And Alcinus Avitus *de Justitiâ, cap. 4.*

Mollibus abjectis, Cilicium dant tegmina setæ.

And Paulinus Nolanus *in Obit. Celsi, v. 451.*

Si modò lugentem gravis hirto tegmine faccus
Caprigenûm fetis dum teget, et stimulet.

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matters not how this guilt was contracted; they found themselves laden, and, therefore, were not only prudent in forbearing to add to the burden, but were prompted to gain a discharge from this paternal debt by any means they could devise. The monastic life offered the fairest promise of remedy. They thought it enough to expiate and wear away the old debt; but had no notion of setting out as innocent persons, and making farther progress in holiness and virtue: to get rid of the original burden was all their care; and this institution offered the best means, as being full of harsh and rigid duties, and removed far from all new temptations: the continual offering up a sacrifice, whether of the real or supposed body of the Redeemer, together with frequent and fervent prayer, they thought would derive a merit upon them. And to do their duty in that state of life, wherein they should *place themselves* (a), thus by choice, they thought most pleasing to God.

To such a faith as this, what could better accord and suit, than a state of life, wherein their duties were very few: for, by this life, they cut off many of the commandments; they rejected all the duties of a father and all those also of a son, and they no longer owed justice or love to a neighbour, when they quitted society; then too, they renounced all conjugal ties, and the best endearments of blood and affection: and, by vowing perpetual chastity, poverty, and fasting, they very nearly expunged all the duties due to a man's self (even sobriety and temperance) and comprehended the whole duty of this new life in piety and religious worship.

Indeed, the most pious persons of those times considered the monastic life as the most perfect pattern of holy living, and such as could not be attained in the world, or be taught by the secular clergy: and this induced liberal gifts and benefactions to the monasteries, and was the cause of frequent bickering and rivalry between the regulars and the seculars. These foundations had such reputation for sanctity, that they became the parents of most parish-churches; the lord of a manor generally sending to a monastery for some priest to occupy the church he had built, and therein perform the holy offices among his tenants. Nay, most of the cathedral churches were founded with a body of this sort, and the bishop was surrounded with a cloister of monks. They had a pre-eminence for fame, and gained an ascendancy throughout the kingdom: they were the seminaries of instruc-

(a) The reformers, afterwards, taught people to do their duty in that state of life, unto which it *shall please God* to call them.

tion, and doubtless well calculated to spread religion over the land, to found churches, and establish parishes; and to perform those great works, which none but *corporate bodies*, in whom reside *power, numbers, and duration*, can accomplish.

Warren the
20th abbot.

They were, indeed, the parents of many parish-churches; but this was not all, they were the great instruments, in the hand of the popes, not only for governing the papal subjects, but for managing and ruling even the kings of the earth: they were the sworn subjects of the pope, and but in a second place the subjects of their civil prince: accordingly, every kingdom experienced a rival jurisdiction, wherein a continual struggle was kept up, by the sovereigns and their barons, on one side, against the pope and clergy on the other. In this twelfth century, which is reckoned the summit of papal power, it is remarkable how instrumental the monks were, to stir up, at the command of the pope, all the nations of Europe, to go upon that mad project of rescuing the Holy Land; but which wars appear, on a nearer view, to have been the contrivance of the popes, to ward off some great blow that threatened themselves. And it is remarkable, likewise, that when, in this same century, the Albigenes and Waldenses appeared, contesting the usurpations of Rome and disproving its doctrines, the popes could not vanquish those new foes by argument or learning; nor combat them with any other weapon than by giving all possible encouragement to the monastic bodies then existing, and by creating new orders of monks; as, for instance, the Dominicans and Franciscans, of whom I shall have occasion to speak more at large in the sequel of this work.

C H A P T E R III.

John I. the
21st abbot.

ON the death of Warren, the monks chose *John*, the first of that name, to be abbot; he was called *John of the Cell*, from having been born at Merkgate Cell, not far from Studham, and therefore sometimes called *John of Studham*. He was a man of extraordinary piety, and a rigid observer of the monastic rules; and for that reason chosen, in order to revive the discipline of the cloister, and recover credit to the abbey, which had fallen into neglect, by the remissness of the late abbot. This John, in his younger days, had studied at Paris; and came home with such reputation, that, in grammar he was reckoned a very Priscian, in poetry a perfect Ovid, and in physic was esteemed equal to Galen. Having taken the habit of a religious, he was advanced to the place of prior of Wallingford(a), and thence was elected to govern this abbey. He committed the care of the cloister, and of the internal government, to Raymond the prior, a man of good counsel, and esteemed prudent and religious, and to the steward, or *cellerarius*, named Roger Parker; and thus, by delivering over to others the cares of the house, he reserved himself for the more serious duties of devotion and contemplation.

Now, with the assistance of these two, he undertook the repair, or rebuilding, of the west front of the church; for which he had received, of the late abbot, one hundred marks. But, before I relate the progress of this work, or the difficulties and troubles that involved both John and his coadjutors, it is proper to say something relative to the

(b) A cell belonging to the abbey, and situated in Berkshire.

structure,

structure, and to ascertain the time, or times, of its being built and completed : and this is necessary, because there appear so many different styles of architecture, that the several parts have been ascribed to different ages, in which a different style, or fashion of building, prevailed ; for, some connoisseurs have thought they could discover, in the choir and transepts, the rudeness and simplicity of the ancient Saxon, prior to the Conquest ; and, in the most improved part, all the elegance and rich variety of Henry VI. or VII.'s time ; with the gradual changes and improvements of the intervening periods.

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But, as it is certain that abbot Paul, in the time of the conqueror and Rufus, began and carried on a great part of the building ; so it is no less certain, from this legacy of Warren, that the whole of the west end had been completed, and did now, in the front, want great reparations. Abbot Paul was appointed in 1077, and ruled sixteen years ; and now, in 1195, a great decay has happened : hence it is probable that this ruined part had not stood 100 years. And, beside, it may be remembered that abbot Richard, the successor of Paul, built the screen and chapel, in honour of Cuthbert, and caused the dedication of the church to be solemnized, with great festivity, on Christmas-day, in the year 1115 : whoever observes nicely the position of that screen, now standing, must acknowledge, that it was built after the arches and piers on either side of it, and therefore those arches and piers must have been built before 1115 : and, when the west front was in a decayed state in 1195, it must follow, that both sides below that screen had been built and completed, not only before 1195, but before 1115. But farther, I have already said, on the express testimony of *M. Paris*, that the church was begun, and great part of it built by abbot Paul, within the first eleven years of his rule ; and that the same was dedicated by his successor in 1115 : now, if the church had not been ENTIRELY rebuilt, dedication would not have been necessary ; and, if it had not been COMPLETE, that solemnity would not have taken place. So that no doubt can remain, but that the whole structure, of its present size, form, and dimensions, was erected by Paul and Richard, between 1077 and 1115.

Whence then, it may be said, comes such variety in the style and fashion of the architecture ? It arose from two causes : partly from the different taste and fancy of the various sets of builders and workmen, but chiefly from the nature of the materials. It is well known, that bands and companies of builders were united by consent, and undertook great works, and enjoyed certain privileges and immunities ; as they were thought the only persons qualified, for their skill, their

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numbers, and union, to put the same in execution(a). Now, as several sets of those men were employed at the same time, each set engaged, as the custom was, to perform such a part, for such a price: but they could work only in the style and manner they had been accustomed to; and therefore some of the sets, unskilled, perhaps, in the nicer operations of stone, would readily undertake to execute the work, with the simple materials, that had been long preparing for the purpose, and were now collected in great quantities; while others, of more skill and judgement, might stand aloof, until the Roman tile was nearly exhausted, or, till they had enforced the propriety of using more tractable materials, both to embellish the church and display their taste. In proof of this, let us take a view of the structure itself: just below the screen, on the south side, are four or five arches and piers, of the most beautiful style in the whole building; and directly opposite these, on the north side, five of the most rude and ordinary: the last are formed entirely of the Roman tile, the first of stone: this makes it evident, that, though the work was executed at or about the same time, yet it was neither by the same men, nor after the same plan; nor was the same sort of materials used, at least in the external. But, as a mark of the antiquity of the former beautiful part, there may be seen, at the spring of the arches, the head of Lanfranc, of Offa and his queen, and of Edward the Confessor, the venerable founders and benefactors; and over their heads are the arms of England (the 4 lions rampant), which were the arms of the said Edward, then the arms of Mercia (3 crowns), the arms of the abbey (a cross like St. Andrew's), the arms of France, and the arms of Westminster (3 birds); all cut in the Totternhoe stone, and very entire at this day.

As to the very rude part of the building, viz. the four piers and arches that support the tower, the whole of the choir, the two transepts, and the five arches above-mentioned; the rudeness argues nothing for its antiquity or its being a mark of originality; for, it arose chiefly,

(a) When the Crusaders built churches in Palestine, which was done under the direction and skill of such bands from Europe, it was common to bind the Saracen captives, taken in battle, to those builders, and make them perform all the most laborious services; and this fact is expressly ascertained by *M. Paris*, who says, in the year 1184. "that the king of Portugal gave, for slaves, the captives and prisoners, to "serve the builders in the repair of the churches." Hence perhaps, from the many Saracens employed in the servile part, this style of building may have been called, *the Saracenic Architecture*, and the name brought into England at the return of the Crusaders. From these bands, likewise, we may perhaps date the origin of the *Free Masons*, who were esteemed the better builders; in opposition to that ignorant and servile tribe, who wrought without fancy, taste, or judgement.

as I have already said, from the intractable materials then used, which, ^{John I. the 21st abbot.} being the Roman tile, would not admit of being formed into beautiful columns, or smooth and well-turned arches, or even make a smooth wall : and the other builders, observing the uncouthness of these materials, took care, in forming their arches and columns, to make the nice and even edges with stone from Totternhoe, and to conceal the Roman tile in the solid inside : and it may be presumed, from the exquisite hardness of these Roman materials, that the structure will surpass, in duration, any thing that is built of stone or marble.

If this be the case, how comes it, it may be said, that the west front was so soon decayed ? Because, it is probable, it had been built, for the sake of ornament and a more complete finish, of some different material, as of the Totternhoe or some other stone : and it is manifest at this day, that what part is made of that stone or of the Sussex marble, is in the sheltered part of the gate and arch-way, and that such part as is exposed to the weather is composed of the Roman tile : yet the first is most decayed.

Having thus shewn, that the rudeness and simplicity of the choir and transepts are owing, chiefly, to the very uncouth materials wherewith these parts were built, which had been collecting for a length of years, and which would allow no arch but the plain semi-circle, without any lessening from its outer edge ; and having stated, that, when these materials were almost exhausted, the builders had recourse to the Totternhoe stone, and of that constructed all the beautiful parts below the rude ; it may be proper to add, that we may here plainly discern the error of those critics in architecture, who assert, that the pointed arch arose first in the time of Henry III. and is seldom found in earlier constructions ; whereas, in this structure, the pointed arch is to be seen, in all the several specimens of good and complete building : and the same was undoubtedly erected in the time of the Conqueror and his sons, before 1115. Indeed, so complete and perfect is the style of these beautiful parts, that the authors may be thought to have reached the summit of their art : for, it is not only calculated for strength and duration ; but the proportion of the several parts of the arch and its columns is most exquisite, and contrived with so much judgement, that they lose nothing of their beauty, though placed more than forty feet above the eye of the observer. These specimens of the perfect Gothic are equal, in themselves, to any work, in any cathedral ; but yet, as they consist only of four or five arches in each specimen, they appear not with that commanding admiration, which results from a whole and complete building, erected in this style. The cathedral

John I. the cathedral at Peterborough is of that sort, and uniform throughout:
 21st abbot. and so much resembles some of these specimens, that, as it was built
 later, we may almost say, the style and form was copied from this
 abbey church.

This ancient and religious style of building has never received its due praises, nor the inventors their due merits, from those even who pretend to understand their works. Perhaps nothing has so much contributed to keep down their fame as calling them *Gothic*; and, because invented in rude and unpolished ages, this art itself is likewise thought to be a rude jumble of contrivances. But be it considered, that it was the invention of people, who lived some centuries after the Gothic name was sunk and undistinguished among the nations of Europe: it was invented and improved by Christians, and men of pious and elevated minds. WHEN it began, or WHERE, we know not. But when men saw that Heathen temples, though beautiful and exquisite in the external parts, were, within, neither beautiful nor enlightened, (for they were without windows, and full of smoke and filth, from lamps (a) and fires), nor fit to be applied to the worship of a pure and holy mind, they learnt to build for themselves: and here it must be said, that they studied the internal from the beginning, and aimed at such a structure as should tend to raise the thoughts, elevate the mind, and captivate the heart of man, by charming his sight. Indeed, the Romish worship had every thing in it, to arrest the *senses* of its votaries, and withdraw them, as they thought, from all worldly vanities: music and melody for the ear, incense and rich perfume for the nose, and every display of painting and statuary to engage the eye. But, before these arts prevailed or were called in, the building was contrived with every sort of skill and art, to raise the mind to a contemplation of that God whom they worshipped: lofty in its roof, enlightened, and chearful; spacious, for processions and great assemblies of worshippers; full of pillars, as necessary to support a heavy roof; yet, when strength was attained by their massy pillars and thick walls, they contrived to reduce these solid and clumsy parts with such art, in shaping them, as to give an air of lightness, without diminishing the strength.

They were confined to no rules of proportion; or, rather, had never studied to confine the art within any rule: they built from fancy, guided only by a judicious taste. In their arches and columns they have shewn great ingenuity, not only in placing three or four

(a) *Lychnychi penfiles in delubris.* Plin. Lib. 34.

rows of such work in height, but in making the lower row large in its parts, gradually lessening the parts of the next, and so diminishing as they rise; thus, they have shaped the columns and the arches in such a manner as to make the work appear light and easy, without prejudice to its strength: the variations in their arches are likewise very ingenious, as being both beautiful and strong: and, indeed, that boundless variety which appears, not only in the necessary and substantial parts, but in the ornamental, is so chaste, simple, and correct, that it ever appears with a fitness and propriety suitable to its place and its use. It was no small advantage in these structures, that they enabled the builders to use and employ all the small stones; for, of such are their works composed, both within and without: but this defect was supplied and made up by using an incomparably good cement.

John I. the
2^d abbot.

This kind of building was in use and fashion in England, from the time the Normans first became connected with this country, (before the Conquest,) until the reign of Henry VIII. at which time it gave way, only, on the discovery of the Greek and Roman architecture. But, although it was in universal use, yet not a scrap of any design on paper is come down to this time, nor are the names of any of the principal builders, in that long period of five hundred years, now so much as known: except William of Wickham be thought the architect of Edward III. and Nicolas Cloke, bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, the architect of Henry VI.; the first having conducted the building of Windsor castle, the last that of King's College Chapel. Yet their works will preserve the fame of their art as long as any Grecian architecture shall be standing; for, on a comparison, the advantage and general utility must appear on the side of the former; because the exquisite art of the Grecian goes only to the perfect beauty of the column and the entablature, and the repetition of these in a grand portico, or a peristyle and arcade; and there its beauty is great, and its perfection complete; owing to its very fine marble and the geometrical knowledge of the artists: but it is a mere external architecture; and provides not, in the least degree, for the internal use, beauty, or convenience. This church-architecture ought to be called, *The Christian Order*: for, as it has been ever used for places of worship, and was invented with that view, and is exquisitely adapted to that purpose, so will it hereafter prevail, more or less, in all new churches, as being the most perfect work of man's art, to elevate the mind and raise ideas and affections suitable to the Christian worship.

John I. the
21st abbot.

But to return to abbot John. He set himself in great earnest to repair the decayed front, and is reported to have proceeded in this manner; he caused the old wall to be taken down, even the hard and solid part of it, where the materials were of the tile and the mortar impenetrable; then he began to draw together timber, and stones not a few, with some columns and planks; after which, he assembled a set of masons (*cæmentarii*), the head of which was one Hugo de Goldcliff, a deceitful knave, but an excellent artist: Hugo was employed, and, having dug the trench and laid the foundation, he began to build; but in a very short time the hundred marks were found to be expended, together with many more, and a daily charge going on; nor was the work so far advanced as that the wall was even with the ground. On this, the abbot began to feel weary, and, perceiving that Hugo was adding many carvings and ornaments that were very expensive, yet very trifling, before the wall was raised to the height of a house-floor, the abbot grew quite tired and timid, and the work began to grow languid: in the following winter, the wall being uncovered, the stones crumbled away, the columns, with their bases and capitals, fell to the ground, and the whole exhibited the appearance of ruin and rubbish: the workmen hereupon withdrew and quitted the *job*, as it is called, but were denied their wages. Perhaps, when they found the hundred marks gone and no speedy supply, they might think they had done enough; and, by the character of Goldcliff, this was probably the true case.

The abbot then assigned the work to the care of one of the brethren, named Gilbert de Everholt, and imposed a tax of one sheaf of corn, to be paid yearly, for every acre sown of the abbey's estates: this tax, being begun in the third year of John's election, was continued during his whole life, which was seventeen more, and for ten years of his successor's; nor did the work advance in any manner to administer joy to the old abbot, but was a constant source of grief and sorrow. He offered many presents of gold and silver to any person who would forward the work, and caused this offer to be proclaimed through all the lands of the abbey, and some of the dioceses; and, having sent one Amphibalus to travel about with relics, and pretend "that he had been raised from the dead by the merits of Alban and Amphibalus," and was able to give good proof of their miracles," he collected, by this illusion, great sums of money; but this unfortunate work absorbed all the supplies, just as the sea drinks up all rivers: and, as the sea receives thereby no signs of increase, so this work received no advancement. After much useless expence, and at the death of Everholt,

the

the work was given up; though entrusted to another curator, named ^{John I. the} Sisseverne, who had the care and conduct thereof for thirty years ^{21st abbot.} after; and, though he received great supplies, yet the work did not advance two feet in height in any one year.

At the death of Eversholt, the abbot turned his thoughts to more prudent counsels; and, finding the refectory to be decayed and ruinous, he caused the same to be pulled down and rebuilt: this was completed in a handsome manner and brought to a happy conclusion, during his life, to the no small joy of himself, and to the better entertainment and festivity of the brethren. While this work was going on, he caused the dormitory, now old and ruinous, to be rebuilt, and also a dwelling adjoining, used and inhabited by the domestics. These improvements he finished in a complete manner, and with the entire consent and approbation of the convent; for, in order to discharge the expence of these two splendid edifices (a), as they were called, the convent gave up their wine (b), by general consent, for the space of fifteen years: though the good abbot lived not to see the end and conclusion of the compact.

Another vexation, that caused great grief to John, was, a new claim set up to the wood of Northaw, by Robert the son of Walter (c); who, being an earl of large possessions, and surrounded with relations and dependents, was able to pursue his pretended right with great trouble and injury towards the abbot and the monastery. John supported the contest with spirit and firmness; being assisted by the experience and wisdom of Raymond, the prior; and Roger Parker, the steward of their household; and by William Sisseverne, a knight, and steward of the manors and estates; and by Lawrence de Therebrugge, a knight of great eloquence and prudence, who shewed that he had not the least fear of the threats of Robert. The earl, after causing infinite mischief and trouble to the abbot, and having procured four of his dependents to enter into a plot against the life of the said Lawrence, at length submitted; and the wood remained in the possession of the abbey.

Soon after, the claim was revived; and Robert produced a grant under the seal of the conventual chapter: this alarmed and confounded the abbot, until it was discovered that one William Pigun (d), a false brother in the convent, had been gained over by Robert, to frame

(a) Nobilium Domorum.

(b) That is, by refusing to buy any, and by selling what they made.

(c) Fitzwalter, perhaps a descendant of Robert de Valoinges.

(d) Since called Pigeon.

John I. the 21st abbot. and contrive for him this forged deed, and, in the hurry of business, during other transactions, to put to it the common seal, in a treacherous and clandestine manner. My author loads the memory of this Pignon with every epithet of reproach, and says that John sent him to the cell at Tinnmouth, there to undergo a perpetual penance, if that could efface the guilt of his crime; and that, at his death, which happened soon after, a voice was heard, by some in the dormitory, repeating these words, *cape, Satan, cape, Satan*; whence it was concluded that Satan had chosen him.

It seems Pignon had conceived a dislike and hatred to John, for being refused by him in a request to have his nephew admitted a monk, at that time a school-boy in the town; and it is probable that his late exile had sharpened his temper to a keener edge against the abbot. However, he died suddenly, it was said, after a very intemperate debauch; in which, being full of wine and meat, he passed from ebriety to sleep, and from sleep to death, by a natural and common gradation.

John was now so infirm and languishing in his health, that he deputed William Sisseverne to transact all business for him; which William, as steward, performed for a year and a day. John having still great dread of the open violence or private machinations of Robert, he prudently offered terms of accommodation and peace; and Robert, severely struck, says *M. Paris*, with the sad end of his friend Pignon, and through some compunctions of conscience, fearful also of the vengeance which Alban might take on him or prevail upon God to inflict, and thinking that more of his enormities might come to light, listened to overtures. The deed was committed to the flames, and John consented to give him the church's estate at Bishopscote, worth 10l. a year.

This instance is one of many, which occurred in those days, wherein the tyranny and avaricious encroachments of the rich and great was frequently employing itself against such as were thought unable to defend themselves: and the meekness and gentleness of abbot John served to invite such kind of contests and usurpations. For, the same Robert set up a claim also to the patronage of the cell at Bynham (a), the prior of which, named Thomas, had been removed by John for his partial regards towards Robert; on which occasion the earl claimed the right of making the prior, and pretended he had a deed from the abbey, granting him that privilege, and that, by the tenor of the same, no prior could be turned out without his leave: in support of

(a) Now Bynham, in the county of Norfolk, and situate near Walsingham.

his claim, he beset the cell with armed men, threatening the defenders with extreme punishment, if they (being thirteen brethren) would not surrender. The king, hearing this at court, expressed great displeasure at the daring insolence of Robert, and sent an armed party to raise the siege, and retrieve the honour of the church.

John I. the
21st abbot.

It was now the reign of king John, and in that part of the same, when the pope was waging war against him; and Robert was set at the head of one of the armies, assuming the title of constable (a) of the army of God: this he did by the encouragement and advice of the pope, Innocent the third. When John submitted to the pope, then Innocent raised a persecution against Robert, and caused all his possessions to be confiscated, and himself to be banished, or compelled to wander in distress and want. At length, in the reign of Henry III. he died, but refused ever to quit his claim to the patronage of Binham or give up the pretended deed. However, at his death, his confident, friend, and fellow soldier, Adam, the son of William, or, as he would be called now, Adam Fitzwilliam, who had been privy to the whole transaction, and was suspected to have forged the deed, gave it up to the abbey; declaring all the secrets of his patron Robert: and, in expiation of his own guilt in the affair, he presented to the church and offered on the great altar one large silver cup, gilt, out of the goods of the said Robert; but this cup was afterwards stolen.

But other and heavier afflictions awaited the patient abbot. For, during the interdict from the pope, in which all divine worship was suspended and the celebration of holy offices prohibited, an injunction came from the king, commanding to condemn the pope's decree, and to return to the holy solemnities and the usual modes of worship. On which he called a council of the brethren, where it was resolved, in due form, *that it was better to obey God than man*: and he thus refused compliance with the king's command. On this the king took possession of the abbey, and posted in it an armed force, under the command of one Robert London (b), a clerk, and in great favor with

(a) This man was one of the most strenuous asserters of the liberties of the subject, and foremost in demanding *Magna Charta*; his name also stands first in the attestation to that deed, as copied by *M. Paris*. Yet he could deny liberty and justice to his inferiors.

(b) This Robert had been sent by the king, the year before, to the great king of Morocco, called admiral Marmeline, with an offer of the crown of England, to be held of him as a fief; and, during Robert's abode in the monastery, he used to show and exhibit, with much pomp, the jewels and splendid presents, which he pretended to have received from Marmeline; and of these, *M. Paris* says, he was himself a beholder and admirer.

John I. the king : nor would the king restore the abbey and quit possession,
 21st abbot. until the abbot laid down six hundred marks.

In the same year, 1214, the king, having thrust into the see of Durham one Richard de Marisco, (for he was never duly elected), ordered him to make a requisition of the abbot of five hundred marks more. This Richard was lord chancellor, and bishop of Durham ; but, beside squandering the revenues of the see, he was bound in duty to provide for the exigences of his master : and, having sent for the abbot, he addresses him thus, ‘ My lord abbot, there is not a better ‘ man in England than you : to what amount are you willing to assist ‘ the king? We know that you have given him six hundred marks ; ‘ but that was for the delivery of your abbey, which the king had a ‘ right to have held ; and therefore you had an equivalent : but now ‘ let us see, how far your mere liberality will go, and whether it will ‘ not be better to give five hundred more, and receive thanks for ‘ them.’ The abbot startled at the exaction, and began to mutter. ‘ Oh !’ saith Richard, ‘ why do you murmur ? the sentence is passed, ‘ and cannot be altered : and is it not better, and more like a good ‘ subject, to give *five* hundred and receive thanks, than to give *two* ‘ or *three* hundred and receive none ?’ No intreaties could avail to mitigate this unjust demand, and the abbot was compelled to pay, to the great detriment and burthen of his church.

The experience and practice of abbot John had been so great, that he is said to have been able to repeat a whole service, perhaps fifteen or twenty psalms, without book ; nay, that he could repeat them backward, and not err in any of the responses : and his sanctity was such, that, if he sang alone, the responses were made by angels. Indeed, in one of the piers on the north side of the body, there is a large cavity, to be approached and entered from the gallery (*triforium*), with an aperture toward the middle walk ; and which seems calculated for no other possible use but to speak through, unseen.

There were in the time of this abbot many paintings made and hung up in the church ; they were executed chiefly by some of the monks, among whom was John of Colchester, and others, named Richard, William, and Simon, by whose hands several of the saints and holy men were delineated in colours or represented in curious carving : all the wall surrounding the great altar was adorned with St. John, St. Stephen, St. Amphibalus, and St. Benedict : by the hand of Simon there was a curious picture of St. Peter and St. Michael, and another of St. Thomas. These pictures were all in being, and, I suppose,

suppose, in great estimation, in the time of *M. Paris*, who might be ^{John I. the} a young monk at this time (1214), and who lived himself to 1259. ^{21st abbot.} By the care and industry of Raymond, the prior, many noble and useful books were obtained, by copying, and added to the collection; and in particular a very elegant book, styled *Historia Scholastica cum Allegoriis* (a).

It is to be noted, that there were several altars at this time in the church, beside what was the principal, and called *the Great Altar*: these were dedicated to different saints, and received prayers and gifts, at the pleasure of pious persons, who sought relief, or made application to them, as mediators and intercessors at the throne of Grace: one of these was dedicated to the Virgin Mary; and on this altar a golden cup was made an offering by Richard de Clothall, knt. a man of piety, and most affectionate to the abbot.

John was the author of divers good statutes: the first of which was, that, in consideration of their poverty and hardship of travel, any monk, on his journey to this abbey, might turn aside out of the road, and be entertained, both man and horse, at any farm or grange, which he could find, belonging to the abbey. The second was, that the number of monks should be one hundred; but none farther, or beyond that number, should be admitted, unless well recommended for science or rank, or by petition from some great man, whom they feared to offend. Another statute was, that, in celebrating either private or public masses, the number of collects, then repeated, should not exceed seven; because seven were sufficient to make prayer effectual; and, beside, it was a number of great dignity.

This pious abbot, finding his end approaching, spent his latter days in frequent exhortations to the brethren, and in mortifications to himself: he caused himself to be placed in the middle of the chapter-house, on a fall-stool, that is, in a kneeling posture, and his garments to be stripped off to the bare skin; in order to shew them, what a poor, emaciated, deformed, wretch an old man was, and to give them a lesson of reflection, on comparing themselves with him. He was conveyed thence to the infirmary, and placed on a stone there prepared and used for this purpose, where the extreme unction was administered: He declared, as if by a prophetic spirit, that he should not survive the third day; which accordingly did come to pass: and the intervals of rest he employed in serious exhortation and advice, and in distributing little presents to those about him; but one of the brethren, perhaps

(a) One of these in *Ben. Coll. Lib. Cambridge*.

John I. the 21st abbot. thinking himself forgotten, interrupted the serious moments of the company, by crying out, that the abbot had once given above one hundred and fifty marks to a certain kinsman, to fit him out and pay his expence of being knighted: "True," says the abbot, "and I cannot deny such an act of liberality; but I procured for you the tithes and offerings of St. Stephen's church in this town, and also I have purchased, for one hundred and fifty marks, the lands of Hammond: and all these profits have I bestowed on your kitchen, for the augmentation of your commons." "Right, O father! thou hast done well, and thou hast been beneficent unto all," was the answer. But directly did the abbot, though on his death-bed, give orders, that his accuser should be sent away to some distant cell (a).

However, four or five joining in disapprobation, among whom was the keeper of the seal, they drew up a paper to disannul that deed and to abolish the practice, and brought the form to be read and sealed by the abbot. then dying: he heard and understood the subject; but could not speak, or express his dislike otherwise than by turning away and shaking his head: the bearer of the seal replied, "the silent man gives consent enough;" and then gave confirmation to the transaction. This was the last time of using that seal; for, at the death of the abbot, it was broken, and, as in these times with the seals of all deceased prelates, sent to the arch-bishop. Thus ended the life and rule of abbot John the first, in the year 1214; the year before the barons obtained the great charter; and two years before the death of king John.

William the 22d abbot.

As soon as the abbacy was vacant, it was judged necessary to send two of the brethren to the king, to ask leave to proceed to an election; and the convent made choice of Robert de Brightwell and William de Trumpington, for this embassy. The king was then in Poitou; but, though he gave them audience, he contented not to the matter or subject of their petition; well knowing, that the longer he kept the vacancy open, the more wealth and substance he should draw from the abbey's estates, which, at the death of an abbot, as in a bishopric, reverted to the hands of the king and custody of his lord chancellor: this was early in the spring, and he put them off until his return to England, in November. In the mean time a valiant knight, named William de Trumpington, made interest with the king in behalf

(a) What did the religion of these monks consist in? when, amid all this solemn preparation for death, such bitter resentment dwelt in the abbot's breast, that, with his last breath, he could endeavour to entail misery on a fellow-creature!

of William the monk, who, he said, was his relation, and who, though a young man, had been seneschal to Sayer, earl of Winchester. The monks, finding by what interest he was supported, and fearing to offend the king or earl, made choice of *William de Trumpington*: he was elected and installed on the 20th of November, 1215, and was prepared to receive the benediction from Eustace, bishop of Ely, before the great altar, on the first day of Advent following.

William the
2d abbot.

This abbot immediately quitted, as if with contempt, the society and converse of his former friends and associates of the cloister; and, mixing with seculars and laymen, followed their ways and manner, both in his diet and his conversation: this was so new and unexpected by his electors, that they took the liberty to remonstrate and argue with him; these were, Raymond the prior, Walter de Rheims, Alexander de Langley, Alexander Appleton, Fabian the superior, Aylmer, Hubert Ridell, and John Scott; who all spoke of the election with some self-condemnation, as if they deserved this disgrace, for regarding the king more than the law, in the form of the election. In a chapter, held soon after, the monks proceeded to give him severe reprehension for his libertine conduct and carriage; claiming, at the same time, the privilege and freedom of the body, contained in the late charter: "Truly," says William, "I did make that charter, or deed, and by my diligence procured it; but I knew not then what I was doing: now I well know what I was ignorant of then." "True my Lord," saith Aylmer, "Now you know that you are abbot; which you did not then." A few days before this, a monk was ordered to be sent off to some distant cell, though without the consent of the convent: the poor wretch, in spite of all his tears and most humble intreaties, was forced to comply; and he died there, soon after, in great anguish of mind. Within a short space another was sent away and never heard of again.

By the procurement of the abbot, the pope's legate, named Nicolas, came to the abbey, and, having convened the body, desired to inspect a certain charter, granted by the late abbot: it was put into his hand, and, when he had perused it, he said, "My brethren, are ye mad! what! do you mean to renounce the obedience which ye have vowed unto God with a solemn oath?" and instantly tore the charter into pieces; and, breaking the seal in like manner, he threw it before them. On sight of which, the pride of the most lofty was humbled, and the wit and irony of the most ingenious put to silence, and, the chapter being dissolved, they departed full of amazement and

William the 2^d abbot. confusion; the legate directing, that, if any murmur should arise, he might be sent for.

In a few days the prior Raymond, a man of great character, for wisdom, fidelity, and diligence, was removed from that office, and sent away to the cell at Timmouth, much against his will and to the great grief of the old man, who was thus not only banished from his friends, but robbed and spoiled of all his books and stripped of every thing that might be the consolation of his old age.

William, in order to root up all seeds of complaint and discontent, thought proper to remove others of his brethren and send them to some of the distant cells: these were William Carne, John Seldford, Aylmer, and Walter Standon. As for Alexander de Langley, he sent him, at the request of the Countess of Arundel who was patroness of Wymundam (a), to be the prior of that church and cell; but the poor man soon after became so ill, by an alienation of mind and loss of his reason, as to be incapable of his charge: he was accordingly sent back again, and his place supplied by Ralph de Whitby. This Ralph was originally of Stanham, or Stoneham, and became a monk of Whitby, where he was chosen prior; but, after suffering divers troubles and persecutions, he left that monastery, and prayed to be admitted at St. Alban's: and, having governed the cell of Whitby with great prudence and circumspection, was now thought a proper person to rule that of Wymundham. Raymond's place of prior was filled by Walter of Rheims, a monk of good learning and zealous for the honour and reputation of the order.

This was the year 1215, so famous for the contest of the barons (among whom also were many of the bishops and abbots), who obtained of king John *the Great Charter* of their liberties. But I find not that our abbot took any part in those transactions: indeed, he had been so lately advanced, and owed his preferment so much to the king, through the recommendation of his kinsman, that William could not make a declared opposition to the king. And, though several bishops and abbots joined the barons and with them assembled at Stamford, then at London, and afterwards at Staines, yet it is probable that he staid quiet at home and settled his own little domestic kingdom.

The great transaction of Runemede was in June 1215. But the pope excommunicated the barons and Langton the archbishop, and

(a) This place is the same as Wyndham, and is situate in the county of Norfolk. The patronage of this cell, contended with some warmth between a former earl and abbot Robert, (p. 70.) seems now to have been compromised.

declared the articles of *Magna Charta* no longer binding on the king. John then breathed nothing but war; and, providing his castles with men and stores, he set forth, in the winter following, to raise forces, and in the middle of December came to this abbey with a numerous train of adherents and soldiers. Here, in the chapter-house, he held a grand consultation on the future plan of renewing and carrying on the war; and here it was determined, that he should raise two armies: the one to curb and restrain the Londoners; the other to march northwards, and fight the barons troops and the mercenaries under Lewis the Dauphin of France, who had invaded England and joined the rebellious barons against their tyrannical sovereign. John then passed on to Dunstable and Northampton: and, in the course of this campaign, he took up his abode, for some time, at the castle of Langar, in the county of Nottingham.

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2^d abbot.

During this contest, Lewis the Dauphin thought proper to make a visit to abbot William: and, after the first salutations, the prince proposed, that, as he was in possession of great part of the kingdom, he, the abbot, should also do homage to him and consent to acknowledge him for his sovereign. This the abbot refused, unless he could be absolved from his allegiance to his former and lawful prince; and, though the Dauphin used many threats, yet still William was firm and uncomplying: at last, the prince threatened to burn down the abbey and the whole town. Here Sayer, the former friend of William, interposed and mollified the rage of this blustering prince, and, by William's presenting him with eighty marks, saved both abbey and town; for, the prince departed with the present, and some disappointment.

It was during the fury of this civil war, that one Falco, a great partizan of the times, came to this town, and committed horrid outrages, his followers having slain one of the abbot's servants in the very church; and, after robbing the townsmen, they seized one, and in a violent manner, roasted him alive. This fierce invader, before he would depart, exacted one hundred marks from the abbot. But he met with his just deserts, some years after, at Bedford, where his company and followers were most of them hanged, and himself driven out a vagabond and beggar for life (a).

At the end of the year 1215, and in November, the pope's summons to a general council was complied with, and, among the prelates of England, went our abbot, taking with him Alexander Appleton

(a) *M. Paris*, anno 1225.

William the
22d abbot.

and Roger Porretan, brethren of great fame for learning and experience; and accompanied, on his journey, by the abbot of Westminster. The chief business of the council was to urge on, with more speed and success, the holy war: but many subjects of a domestic nature, for the better rule of the church (a), were discussed. And one day, while the pope and council were all present, our young abbot rises, and, the subject of debate being the mass and some circumstances thereof, begs leave to put a question; which was, he said, to be informed, "whether it was lawful for those abbots, whose churches were possessed of the body of some saint, to mention his name also, in conjunction with the other intercessors and advocates at the throne of God?" to which the pope, with some circumspection, answered, "that it was proper and agreeable to right, that the saint, his name, and his intercession and interest, should, in its proper place, be demanded, in the solemnity of the mass." On the solution of which question, many thanks were bestowed on abbot William, by all those who were possessed of the body of any dead saint; in particular by the abbots of St. Edmund's and of Durham.

The pope, when the council broke up, inquired who that ingenious abbot was, who had put the question; and, being told he was the abbot of St. Alban's in England, his holiness paid him many compliments for the weighty matter of the question and the prudence of his address: on which Roger Porretan advised William to resign his abbey, as being sure of receiving higher promotion from the Pope. "No," says William, "I learn wisdom from the experience of others: you did so, with regard to your abbey of Bath, but never got any thing at all after." The pope sent for William to a private audience, and William, with exceeding joy, obeyed: "What?" saith his holiness, "are not you the abbot of St. Alban's, which hath obtained from us such great privileges and benefactions? I cannot suffer a man of such eminence to depart, without a more especial compliment being paid to me;" and he refused to let William set forth from Rome without laying down at the feet of his holiness one hundred marks.

(a) The XIth canon enjoins, that, in every cathedral church, there shall be kept a grammar-master to teach, *gratis*, the clergy of that church, and other poor scholars; and, in the metropolitan church, beside the grammar-master, a divine, to teach the priests and other ecclesiastics the holy scriptures, and what relates to the cure of souls. The XVIIth is against the effeminacy of some clerks, who spent part of the night in feasting or in prophane company, who slept till day-light, and who, in saying their matins, left out one half of the office.

Soon

Soon after his return, Alexander Appleton died : and Alexander de Langley, having recovered his health, was substituted in his place and made keeper of the abbey seal : he was a man of learning, and, being very expert in writing and in rhetoric, was capable of writing an elegant epistle to the pope, if need be. But, in a short time, his understanding failing him once more, and growing quite frantic, he was ordered back to the cloister, and well lowered with bleeding ; but this was no remedy : and, assuming the airs of a great man, and in his extreme pride deriding the abbot, he was ordered to undergo a very severe flagellation, and to be sent in irons to the cell at Binham ; where he was kept, in solitude and in fetters, to the day of his death, and interred with his chains on (a).

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About this time, Thomas, bishop of Norwich, held an ordination in the church of St. Alban, at the great altar, on the 18th of December : this was done at the request of the abbot ; and the bishop dedicated, or consecrated, as it is now called, a cemetary, or burial ground, for the church of St. Alban, in which many of the faithful had been buried during the interdict (b) : he dedicated, also, a burial place for the church of St. Peter, and one for the cell of St. Mary de Pree, and an altar in the great church to the honour and worship of St. Leonard. All this was done about Christmas, 1216, and just after the death of king John.

(a) From the inhuman treatment of this unfortunate man, it appears pretty evident that *charity and brotherly love* were not the leading characteristics of the monkish religion.

(b) It is probable that these churches had not any *burial grounds*, or *consecrated places*, adjoining, before this time ; for it was not until the days of Gregory II. early in the eighth century, that church-yards had a beginning ; the dead being usually buried near the highways, as the Roman laws directed, and which practice was followed by the Christian congregations, or else in places, remote from the walls of the city or town, set apart for that purpose. But, in the time of the aforesaid Gregory, the priests and monks began to offer prayers for the deceased, and received gifts and offerings from the relations for the performance of those duties ; on which they requested the pope, that the dead might be buried near the places of the monks abode, or in the very churches or monasteries : in order that the relations, coming to the worship and solemnities used in those places, might see their graves, remember them, and be moved to join in prayer and processions near their remains. Cuthbert, the arch-bishop of Canterbury, in 750, brought over this practice into England, and hence is dated the *origin of church-yards* in this island used as burial grounds : then it grew into a custom to bury in the church ; so much, that it gave occasion to a canon, made somewhat before the time of Edward the Confessor, *de non sepeliendo in ecclesiis* : then it was practised in the nave, or body, only of the church, and afterwards under arches by the side of the walls. Lanfranc, arch-bishop of Canterbury, seems to have been the first who brought up the use of vaults in chancels and under the very altars, when he rebuilt the church of Canterbury, about the year 1075. *Ken. Par. Ant.* 592.

Soon

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Soon after the accession of Henry III. the kingdom returned to a state of peace and quiet; and William then resolved to make a visitation of the cells. But he first ordained, that the abbot, whenever he travelled, should be attended by six knights or squires, to bear arms and be a body guard; and this was to be a standing rule whenever the abbot should visit Tinmouth, especially: he appointed, that they should be enfeofed with certain lands, out of the estates of the abbey, which had been held aforetime by certain squires: he directed that their expences, both in going and returning, should be born by the monastery, and that they should find their own horses; but, in case any horse died on the journey, his master should be indemnified to the full value, which was limited at ten shillings: it was also appointed, that each horse should be of decent appearance, and strong enough to carry the cloaths and garments of one monk behind his rider.

This may appear nothing more than having six servants, mounted and armed, to attend his lordship; but, in those days, these knights or squires were not attendants on any other occasion than to defend their lord in times of danger: they enjoyed their lands on this condition. And this was one of the chief marks, wherein great churchmen imitated the lords and barons of the realm: it carried with it a lordly consequence: and, being done at the expence of the body, reflected an honour on St. Alban and his church, much more than if they had been the private servants of the abbot. This military kind of attendance was practised by some of the bishops; and at length, in a very ostentatious degree, by Cardinal Wolsey, when, in the day of his disgrace, he marched from London to York with 160 horse: a piece of grandeur which induced his master, Henry VIII. to leave all future bishops without any means for such pomp and vanity.

The abbot set forward on his journey with his retinue of six knights, and, having taken Belvoir in his way, it was whispered that the prior, Roger de Wendover, committed waste and spoil of the goods, &c. in prodigal living: the abbot admonished him, the prior promised an alteration in that matter, and William proceeded on his journey. When he approached to Tinmouth, he was met by an immense crowd of people, headed by the prior accompanied by the gentry and principal persons of the country; insomuch that the company appeared like an army; many were suffered to come into the cell, to congratulate the abbot; and immense feasting followed: and, after a few days, in which the abbot received the homage of all such as owed duty to him, and regulated and directed all matters of any moment, he appointed a day of departure; at which time the prior, by name

Ralph Gobion, fell at the abbot's feet and begged to be dismissed, crying out, in the words of Simeon, *Now, O Lord! thou lettest thy servant depart in peace*, &c. pleading, at the same time, his great age, many infirmities, and long services: to which the abbot answered only, raising him with his hands, "brother, support your burden a while longer, until " I can provide for the consequences of your resignation." This incident is of no moment. except as it shews the servile obedience which monks consented to and bound on themselves with an oath when they entered the order. And, if the obedience and compliance was so strict in the orders of regular clergy, where their functions and duties were but of little moment, let me ask, if that obedience ought not to be more strict in the seculars of these days, whose functions and duties are of a more serious nature and import?

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2d abbot.

When the abbot came to Wymundham, the prior there, named Ralph de Whitby, was accused of wasting the goods, &c. and of enriching the cell of Whitby, whence he had come at the expence of this cell, and that he courted the favour of the earl of Arundel, in a manner that shewed he loved him more than God, or the abbot, or any one of the brethren: the abbot enjoined an amendment, and, with some admonition to prior Ralph, on the subject of excess and imprudent management, he departed. He then came to Hatfield, that is, Hatfield Peverel, in Essex: and here a very great enormity was alleged against the prior, to which the abbot promised that a speedy correction should be had; but refused to examine into the charge upon the spot. These are trifling events, and, as the charge in each place was much the same, it is probable that they proceeded from some of the monks, who bore a grudge against their priors; as they would have done, had they been gratified in all their wishes and inclinations: and it is likely that, by *waste and extravagance*, the monks meant, that the prior lived in plenty and comfort, and better than themselves.

The abbot returned home, and at the same instant arrives Ralph Gobion, the prior of Tinmouth, with a grievous complaint, what trouble and vexation he suffered from one Simon of Tinmouth, who demanded of him two monks corrodies, that is, maintenance for two monks; which Simon claimed by perpetual right, as the gift of some abbot of this church to the church of Tinmouth: Simon brought with him, for he came also, a huge fighting fellow, named William Pigun, as a champion: for, though it had been settled in a court of law in favour of Ralph, yet, by the judicial practice of the times, if the party, who lost his suit, chose to try it again, and by battle, the same was allowed; and this new trial was called,

William the 22d abbot. called, *disfrationare et per duellum dirimere*; as if it were the same thing to disprove by reason and to fight by deputies. However, it was necessary to answer this new appeal of Simon, and a champion was provided on the part of the prior. The contest ended in favour of Simon and his champion, and Ralph was bound to yield up the two corrodies. But, on this unfortunate conflict, he refused to return any more to his cell at Tinmouth, and begging again his dismissal of the abbot, it was granted; and the abbot entertained him thence forward as his privy counsellor and table companion.

Soon after, the abbot recalled the prior of Wymundham, Ralph de Whitby, who was found quite unable to reform his own excesses, and less able to govern others: he came to St. Alban's, and, in a very decent manner, but in few words, returned thanks to the abbot and brethren for the many favours and honours conferred on him: he then went to the hermitage, assigned to his use by the cell of Whitby, which he found well provided and furnished; and here, having lived a few years longer in the strictest course of piety, he departed this life. In like manner was the prior of Hatfield recalled, named Alexander de Burg, a man of duplicity and very unsteady conduct; and, for his incorrigible excesses, he was stripped of all his former pre-eminence, and degraded to the cloister and common condition of the monks.

The priorate of Belvoir was conferred on Martyn de Borsham, steward (a) of the household of this abbey: and of Wymundham the priorate was conferred on William de Heschamp, a man who possessed less discretion than became his post; and, having fallen under the displeasure and reprehension of the Earl of Arundel, patron of that house, he was removed: his place was supplied by Thomas Mead, who had travelled into the Holy Land with the late earl of Arundel; and, the earl dying there, this Thomas had carefully brought back the dead body and given it honourable interment at this cell. In the room of Alexander, prior of Hatfield Peverel, another person was placed, named Richard de Brantfield, one of the necessary attendants of the abbot. And the place of Ralph Gobion, the prior of Tinmouth, was supplied by one Germanus, a man of northern extraction.

In the year 1219, a very long and expensive suit was finished, by the mediation of Richard, bishop of Salisbury, and the two abbots of Westminster and Waltham, who were appointed for this purpose by letters from the pope. The institution or endowment of vicarages

(a) Cellerarius.

was almost a new thing : and the abbey having the church of Luton, with all its tithes, lands, or glebes, and obventions and offerings, had instituted a vicar ; but had not ascertained his rights, or clearly fixed the revenue necessary and proper for his maintenance ; nor would the abbey allow any authority of the diocesan over the vicar. This controversy arose from the novelty of vicarages and the desire of keeping what they used to receive, as their own ; being accustomed, probably, to send a priest thither occasionally. But now the said judges determined, that the vicar should be presented by the abbey to the bishop of Lincoln, to be approved by him and be instituted ; that his maintenance should arise from some fixed property, namely, all the small tithes and obventions ; that he should be furnished with a suitable mansion and glebe, and be entitled to all the obventions paid or given at the chapels belonging to the said church of Luton, and pay all parish-dues, and procurations, and synodals : and that the bishop of Lincoln and his successors should have full jurisdiction in the said church.

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They ordained also, that, in all other churches, which the abbey had been accustomed to appropriate to its own uses, but to which it had now begun to assign vicars, the rights and authority of the diocesan should be the same as they had been in the said churches, before this dispute had arisen. Which, in fact, was making no determination in the case of the other churches, and left the claims of the bishop and the usual rights of the abbey on the same footing as before. But these judges hoped and thought, that the determination they had made, in the case of Luton, would be a pattern for all future proceedings of the like kind : and indeed it became necessary to appoint by law (which began in the councils and constitutions of the arch-bishops, and received its final completion in Parliament) what should be the legal method of instituting and endowing a vicarage. This business began by petition from the patron to the bishop, was followed with the bishop's instrument and endowment, setting forth the articles of tithes, &c. for the vicar, and, that being presented to the king or his chancellor, a writ from him gave confirmation to the whole : and it was not, until all these steps had been taken, that the vicar could be deemed an ecclesiastic person, and become a member of the ecclesiastic body, with special rights and privileges.

With regard to the cells also, which had usually claimed an exemption from the bishop and acknowledged no superior, beside their abbot, it was ordained, by these judges, that, whenever any prior should be appointed by the abbot, the same should be presented to the bishop, in whose diocese the cell was situate, and receive from his hands the

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spiritual administration, and be subject to all the functions of the parish-church, and payment of tenths and the like duties, in regard to which he was bound to acknowledge the bishop as his lawful diocesan. This was now ordained, but became a general observance afterwards, wherever a cell was united, like a manse and glebe, to a parish-church: but, if it had no connection with a parish-church, it owed no such obedience, and was subject purely to the abbey.

Abbot William, having put all things abroad and without his walls in good order, turned his thoughts to domestic improvements: and the first thing of this sort was to new-furnish the dormitory: here he caused all the bedsteads to be made of oak, which is called a very decent and elegant improvement, but leaves us in the dark as to the former state of this mansion of sleep. The two wings of the church, forming the transept, being much decayed both in the timber and the stone work, and letting in the rain and bad weather, he caused to be repaired with good oak well united and fastened together, and the walls to be strengthened with battlements and turrets.(a) at the corners: the tower also, which threatened ruin, and had, from its form, a very unseemly appearance, he caused to be raised higher and to be well constructed of the best materials; and all these works to be covered with lead.

These great repairs were effected, under the abbot's direction, by the diligence and skill of Richard de Thydenhanger, who was treasurer to the abbey; after whose death, which was much lamented, the abbot, by the persuasion of Matthew Cambridge, keeper of the seal, and of the abbot's privy council, was induced to make farther additions to the tower; and he added those rectilinear projections, like pilasters, on each side of the tower, which serve to vary the flat surface: these were built from the foundation up to the battlements, and were said to give wonderful strength to the walls and beauty to its appearance. The western front also, which had been a tedious job, sometimes advancing and sometimes decaying and falling, the abbot determined to undertake: he did so; and in a short time completed it in its present form; finishing the same with its roof and arches, and exquisite glass windows, and with a good covering of lead, adjoining to the old roof. All the decayed or ruinous parts of the walls he caused to be repaired, many of the windows in the long wall he completed with stone uprights and glass, and he made the two great windows of

(a) Still in good condition.

the wings (a) to be suitable, in fashion, and form, and lighting, to the rest about the church; in such a manner, saith my author, that, by the advantage of this new light, the church seemed, as it were, rebuilt.

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2d abbot.

Walter de Colchester, now sacrist, and an excellent painter and sculptor, constructed a pulpit (b) in the middle of the church, with a great cross suspended in it, with figures of Mary, and John, and other suitable carvings. And William removed the shrine of St. Amphibalus, in which were contained the remains of him and his companions, from the place where the same had stood, namely, close along by the side of the great altar, on the north and near St. Alban's shrine, to a place in the middle of the church, inclosed with an iron grating, where had been fixed a decent altar with a painting and other suitable ornaments. This altar he caused to be dedicated anew to the *Holy Cross*; for, that had been its former title, and to Amphibalus and his companions, whose remains rested in this shrine.

There is nothing that so much shews the ignorance of the Romish church in these ages as the use of altars, which have no necessary place in pure Christian worship. If the church adopted them from the Jewish worship, why did they not copy the whole ceremony of their service, and slay and burn thereon certain parts of the victim? If they took the practice from Heathen worship, they seem to imitate the Heathen throughout, making mediators and intercessors of every pious departed man, just as the Heathen made divers deities or local Gods; and in both cases invoking their aid and interest in Heaven: whereas, it is not more repugnant to reason to make other divinities than it is to scripture to make other mediators and intercessors. If they say, the devout worshipper at the altar offers up his praises to God, and makes a sacrifice of his own sins and frailties, that is true; but an *altar* is not necessary for this proper duty and service. The truth is, that, when the Romish church took up the doctrine of sacrifices, and adopted into their worship an imitation and perpetual rehearsal of the sacrifice of Christ, they made an altar a necessary part of such representation: and, indeed, an altar is the only sensible part of such sacrifice, or service, the rest being quite imaginary and not bearing the least resemblance to the solemnity of a sacrifice; though, at the same time, they wish to communicate spiritual health and

(a) That in the south wing was blown into the church, in 1703, in the famous high wind.

(b) Marks of this are seen, at this day, on one of the piers on the north side just above Cuthbert's screen; the work being cut away to admit a stair-case.

William the strength, and derive all Christian aid from using it. But to return to
 2d abbot. William, and his altars, and ornaments, and relics.

The solemnity of dedicating the altar to St. Amphibalus, and likewise of consecrating the great cross suspended in the pulpit above-mentioned, with the images of Mary and John, was performed by the bishop of Ardfert in Ireland, who stopped on his journey and reposed here for some considerable time. The two gilt shrines, in which had been deposited the remains of Amphibalus and his companions before Warren moved them to more sumptuous shrines, he sent to the church at Redburn, in honour and reverence to that place, where these martyrs had undergone so glorious a trial; and he appointed that a perpetual guard should be kept, day and night, over these shrines, by one monk, to be relieved by another. ‘And,’ says my author, ‘it is plain that God approved this transaction, by the many miracles which were performed at this place:’ but he mentions not any of the particulars.

Among the many laudable deeds of this abbot, it is recorded, as one, that he furnished the church with a most inestimable relic; which was the rib of Wulstan, formerly bishop of Worcester, and a strenuous defender of the church, in the time of William the Conqueror. The present bishop, named Sylvester, intended to make a solemn translation, or, in modern phrase, to remove the body of the deceased Wulstan to a more splendid tomb which he had provided for him: to this solemnity Sylvester invited our abbot with sundry others of high rank. But how William obtained this rib is not said: it could scarcely be by gift; for, in that case, every person would expect the like boon, or compliment: and, had that been done, there could not have been one bone left for the second interment. However, this rib was reckoned a great acquisition; and the abbot caused an altar to be constructed in honour of Wulstan, near the altar of St. Oswin, toward the east, and the rib, inclosed in some work of gold, to be deposited on the same.

He caused many additional ornaments to be made about the great altar; and on the beam, which supports the rood loft, he caused some carvings to be made, representing the history of St. Alban and his martyrdom: ‘a very exquisite work,’ saith *M. Paris*, ‘and performed by that incomparable carver, Walter de Colchester.’ And, in farther honour of the martyr, he ordered six large wax candles to be lighted in every festival, or service, wherein the monks attended in copes; the expence of which was directed to be defrayed by one mark, to be paid by the priory of Binham, in lieu of a certain quantity of herrings thence sent every year to the abbey.

Walter de Ramsey also provided, at his expence, two large wax lights, to burn during the service sung to the honour of the Virgin Mary, in addition to four others which had usually been provided and lighted for her before; two of which, those standing toward the east, had been provided as the gift of Adam, the former steward: and afterward, a lady, named Alicia, the wife of Sir Henry Cock, left as a legacy to that altar one garment, called a *chasuble*, for the use of the officiating priest, of scarlet cloth adorned with a rich gold fringe. William ordained that a constant watch, or guard, of one monk at a time, should be placed over this altar to the Virgin: it stood in the south wing, and the watch took his station near the altar of St. Blaze, in some of the recesses of the wall in the gallery, (*triforium*,) or in a small closet now remaining, with an iron grate in front, which had been built in imitation of the little chamber in the wall, as mentioned in scripture, 2d Kings IV. 10; and from which, being directly opposite the Virgin's altar, he might have a constant view of the altar and its contents, aided at night by wax lights burning thereon. And, whereas it was the custom, in all the great churches, to sing mass, that is, to perform a service in honour of the Virgin, every day; and in this church but once a week, viz. on the Sunday; he appointed this to be done here also every day, and to be performed by a company of six monks at a time, to be succeeded by six more; the names and order being written and hung up, for the purpose of giving public notice: and this service was to be performed by singing, to musical notes, the composition made for the office.

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It is here proper to remark, that great part of the service consisted in singing; and, whenever any prayer intervened, the priest stopped and said, *Let us pray*; which, being copied from the mass-book into our liturgy, sounds oddly, till we understand that it means a transi- tion from singing.

William caused a very loud sounding bell to be cast, and, when con-secrated by the said bishop of Ardfert, to be hung up; this was to be sounded three times every day, to call the six priests and the watch monks to their duty, and to summon all others of the faith-ful, who were devoted to the Virgin, and wished to administer to her honour and procure prosperity to the church or themselves: He farther caused a very curious image of Mary to be carved by Walter de Colchester, and to be consecrated by the said bishop; this curious *Mariola*, as it was called, was to be placed over the altar where mass was to be sung every day to her honour; and, just be-fore her, was placed a wax light bound round and adorned with
flowers,

William the flowers, to be lighted up, day and night, in the principal feasts and
 2^d abbot. processions made in commemoration of her. He caused also the cieling of the south wing, wherein stood the Virgin's-altar, to be covered with boarding somewhat wrought and carved, and the walls of that wing to be cleaned and whitened; and, as he had placed the old and mean image of Mary in another place, so he thought proper to remove a great beam, which was over the great altar, to the south wing, and set it up near the noble Mary. This was calculated to do honour to the Virgin and to render ornament to the church; for, there was carved on it a series, or row, of twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, and in the middle was figured *God the Father* (a), with the synagogue and the church (b). The old cross, and the former Mary, he placed in the north wing, to the edification of the laity and all beholders.

Cuthbert's chapel had been built about 130 years, having been erected by abbot Richard; but it was, at this time, so decayed and ruinous, that William thought it necessary to rebuild it: he therefore constructed it anew of hewn stone, and furnished it with glass windows and all things suitable; and it was raised high enough to admit of a chamber over it, which being capable of holding twelve beds, supplied the want of room in the dormitory: for, ever since John had increased the number to one hundred, it was found that the dormitory could not contain them. In this chapel he constructed an altar (c), and caused the said bishop to consecrate the same and the chapel, dedicating the latter to St. Cuthbert, and John the Baptist, and St. Agnes, a martyred virgin. The said bishop, also, proclaimed an indulgence of twenty days, to every person who would pay his worship at the said altar, on the fast of either saint or the anniversary of the Dedication.

It is to be remarked, that this bishop exercised his function in many parts of this diocese, and particularly in dedications, and failed not to grant indulgences to the faithful, in a manner suitable to his office and dignity. He was employed also, at the request of our abbot, to consecrate many churches and chapels in this diocese; and particularly, the church at Redburn, to the worship of Amphibalus and his companions. This was done with great solemnity, the abbot appearing dressed in his full pontifical habit, and the bishop granting to Gilbert Sisseverne, the prior of Redburn, an indulgence of forty days.

(a) Majestas.

(b) This curious sculpture hath long ago been destroyed.

(c) Its place and situation may still be discerned.

An *indulgence* sounds, in our ears, as if it signified a leave of full gratification, and permission to transgress; but it is a Latin word, and signifies an indulgence to the wishes of the penitent to be released from the pains of hell: these indulgences were granted to the living as well as to the dead, and they proceeded upon this fundamental doctrine, that mankind was already under a state of condemnation, burthened with original sin and guilt, and obnoxious to pains and torments both here and hereafter; and therefore any remission that could be obtained was a desirable object. Now the promise of such remission and the pretensions of possessing this power were a source of great emolument and profit; but by indulgence was meant, a mitigation or release from the pains and penalties of Hell, the power of which the church of Rome had claimed as her right. This impious and absurd doctrine was made up of St. Austin's notion of original sin, and the Pagan notions of the future state; both of which are inconsistent with the true and genuine doctrines of Christ and his apostles: but as the Papal Christians took many parts of their *worship* from that of the Pagans, so did they likewise many of their *doctrines* of the future state: and upon those Pagan notions hath Rome built her doctrines of purgatory (a), invocation of saints, and of divers mediators, &c.

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As a farther improvement to the spiritual matters, he obtained a holy cross and other valuable relics: this cross had been brought by one Lawrence from the Holy Land, where he had dwelt as a monk, in the monastery of Jehosaphat, near to Jerusalem; and he brought also authentic testimonies, from several persons of rank there, in proof of the sanctity of this cross and of its antiquity; for, he pretended it was the real cross upon which Christ had suffered, above 1200 years before. This cross Lawrence deposited, with the proofs and other valuables, in this abbey; promising, that if he failed in his

(a) These purgatorial sufferings, according to the popular creed of Pagan Greece and Rome, are beautifully described by Virgil in his *Æneid*, Lib. VI. v. 735, et sequen.

Quin, et supremo cum lumine vita reliquit,
Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus omnes
Corporeæ excedunt pestes: penitusque necesse est
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.
Ergo exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum
Supplicia expendunt. Aliæ panduntur inanes
Suspensæ ad ventos: aliis tub gurgite vasto
Insectum eluitur scelus; aut exuritur igni.
Quisque suos patimur Manes: exinde per amplum
Admittitur Elysium, &c. &c.

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business, and which was to procure the manor and church of Brightwell, he would leave this invaluable cross as a testimony of his gratitude to this abbey for the *Vaticum*, &c. which they would afford him on his return: the monk was disappointed and did return; leaving this present. A modern eye will easily discern, in this transaction, a trick and fraud; but must allow there was skill and management on both sides.

Together with this cross Lawrence had brought a human arm, pretending and proving, that it was an arm of St. Jerom, who lived and died near Bethlem, in the fifth century; but Jerom was a sacred name in the Romish church, and better known than any other of the fathers: and this arm our abbot caused to be inclosed in some costly work of gold, set with jewels and stones of value, and it was borne in the processions, on all great festivals: there were other relics likewise, being part of Jerom's clothing and his staff. He received also two fingers of St. Margaret brought from the Holy Land by a traveller (a). William procured also another cross, which had long been concealed at London, had passed from father to son, without any creature of the family declaring its value, (and that, too, in times when such relics were inestimable) and was now pretended to have been the actual cross used at the torture and death of Alban: though he was always said to have been beheaded. The abbot now composed a special service in praise of Alban, to be sung every day, and the summons to this solemnity was given and known by the ringing of two bells at once. It began with praying the saint to recommend them to God, &c. and ended with a chorus, addressed to Alban, of *Praise, honour, glory, be to thee for ever*. He composed also a service in praise of all these relics and their owners, naming them singly, but always beginning with the cross: and this was sung with great solemnity.

And here we cannot contemplate the nature of these services without perceiving, that they were calculated to astonish and surprize an ignorant audience, but not to instruct or reform, being always in a language unknown to the common people, and to many of the monks, and conveying no moral precept. The worship, in every part, was addressed to the eyes and ears of the beholders, but not to the heart: and they became believers from admiration and wonder, and were charmed, or seduced, into obedience, not gained by arguments of truth.

(a) *M. Paris*, ad ann. 1223.

William purchased a house in London, for the safe and honourable William the
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abode of himself and successors, or of any of his monks who might have business in London: it was like a palace for size, and there belonged to it a chapel, a good kitchen, a garden, an orchard, a well, a stable, and divers grand apartments, beside a court; and, by building other dwellings round the court and forward to the street, he raised a good rent, and appointed a person to have the inspection and care of the whole: this house cost one hundred marks, and the improvements fifty more. He purchased also, for fifty marks, a house at Yarmouth to lay up in store, at the proper season, salted fish and especially herrings; to the unspeakable benefit and comfort of this abbey.

But, beside all these improvements and conveniences abroad, he studied the same with no less attention at home: and, for this purpose, he added several cloisters, or covered ways, about the monastery, for the better communication between one place and another: he made one cloister from the chapter-house to St. Cuthbert's chapel (that is, along the west and out side of the present south wing,) to keep dry all passengers; because this way was more frequented than formerly, by reason of the chamber made over that chapel: he built another with three sides, viz. from the door of the kitchen to the entrance of the monks' cloister, and then to the door of the strangers parlour, and the third side was from the monks' cloister to the way leading to the factory (a); and these sides were fenced with grating and lattice-work, in order to prevent any person from going into the middle plot, which contained a very nice little shrubbery: the other cloister was constructed round a square court, and had four sides, and they led to the infirmary; the care of this cloister was given to the master of the infirmary. They were all built of sound oak timber, and covered with shingles of the same.

This abbot made great addition to the library by the acquisition of many books; among which was one, of a very handsome appearance, called the Scholastic History, procured, as mentioned before, by the diligence and expence of Raymond the prior. He gave to the church of St. Amphibalus, at Redburn, a very noble psalter bound and enriched in a costly manner; together with a very handsome ordinal, which was a sort of rubric, or directory, necessary to instruct the priests and monks in the form and manner of the services, and generally deposited in some conspicuous part of the church, for the use of all who wanted information: a large book of this sort lay in the abbey-church.

(a) An office where the monks cloaths, &c. were repaired.

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He gave also to the church at Wymundham another psalter of greater value and adorned with exquisite devices. He directed that at the end of the Lord's prayer, which was repeated every hour and by every person in private, they should add these short devout ejaculations, *Κύριε, ἐλέησον, Lord, have mercy upon us*, but thrice : whereas, before, persons used them much oftener. He directed, farther, that the shoes and short boots of the monks should no longer be made of the most ordinary leather, but of such as should have been tanned and properly prepared by the art of the currier.

This monk was able to keep all the estates of the church during the late war, though he was grievously robbed at different times, as, in one single year, to the loss of one thousand marks, by that most tyrannical of the sons of men, king John. Their estate at Berkhamstead was pillaged of money and goods to the value of 100l. There was a present, by extortion, made to Lewis, the Dauphin, while at Dover, of 100l.; and another present to Sayer, earl of Winton, his kinsman, and the barons when in arms at London, of 50 marks. The estate at Rickmersworth and that at Watford were pillaged; the first of 60 marks, and the latter of 100l. and a good palfrey worth 10 marks. The treasurer (a), or collector of the abbey's revenues, was likewise a great sufferer; and the other officers also sustained losses; so that, in the whole, it was computed that the monastery and its servants did not lose less than 2,500l. In short, all their estates in this country were robbed; but none were confiscated or torn from them. And yet, notwithstanding these losses, such was the good management of William, that, exclusive of building, and repairs, and ornaments for the church, wherein he expended large sums, he purchased and procured much land, and increased the yearly rents and income of the abbey. And, if any person desires to know the particulars, my author refers us to the oak-cabinet which lies in the great chest that holds their papers, and in that are contained all their muniments, or deeds, and the several titles of them written on the inside of the lid.

(a) When king John came to Redburn, the treasurer lost 3 good horses and 2 asses, and a good new cart shod with iron; worth in all 50s.; beside other losses, to the amount of 60s. more: and, when Falco came to Langley and set fire to the town, there were three houses burnt down and thirty-five hogs destroyed, worth in value at least 10l.: He lost also, by the same rapacious plunderer, five good horses, worth 6l. and more; and a good plow, worth 10s.: and, when the marshal of the French troops came, he was robbed of 24 horses, and, in oxen, hogs, and fowls, to the value of 40 marks. And at Winflow he lost seven horses, and, in cows, sheep, geese, eggs, and poultry, to the value of 10 marks. So that the whole losses of this officer came to at least 58l.

William

William performed a very kind act towards a vicar in the north of England, which was never mentioned without great commendation and praise. This vicar, by name Hugo, and an Italian, had got possession of the living of Hertburn, in Durham, by intrusion and authority from Rome, without any consent or leave of its rightful patron, the abbey of St. Alban. At length comes this Hugo, after a long journey, to the abbot, and makes a free and voluntary confession of his usurpation, and, having had enjoyment thereof for many years, begs leave to thank him and to make resignation of the same. The abbot answered, "I accept your resignation, Hugo, and indeed I have never found such faith in any Transalpine." Hugo now retired with an easy conscience. In half an hour the abbot called him and said, "Now, Hugo, I will give you the living out of charity, and in a *legal* way; that you may *always* enjoy peace of mind, and have a *perpetual* ease of conscience."

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It had been an unsettled point, for some years, what canonical obedience was due from priors of cells, who had also parish-churches. For, as priors, they were subject intirely to their abbot; and therefore they wished to withdraw themselves totally from every other jurisdiction. But this was settled, by a composition between the bishop of Norwich, and the priors of Binham and Wymundham who had hitherto acknowledged no authority over them or their churches, beside that of the abbot, without considering that the office and duty of rector was antecedent to that of prior. And now it was decreed, by a commission from the pope to the dean of London, the archdeacon of Middlesex, and the master, or dean of the arches, as follows: that the said priors should attend the visitations of the bishop and his successors, and take their seats with the other priors, and, without changing their travelling dress, may appear in great coats and boots (a), and shall do and perform all canonical obedience at the bishop's synodical meetings: that vicarages shall be created in every parish where there is a priory (b) in this diocese: that the vicars shall be presented to the bishop and admitted: and that the rights of the abbey should remain safe and entire, with a power over the monks and of placing or displacing the priors. Thus were the two jurisdictions made distinct and separate, the two cures placed in different hands, and the great tithes left with the abbey. This composition was decreed in the year 1228 (c).

(a) In Cappis et Calcaribus. *M. Paris.*

(b) Which were Binham, Wymundham, Snettisham, Hapsbury, and Dersingham.

(c) This beneficial rule extended no farther than through the diocese of Norwich; for, in 1319, Walter, bishop of Coventry inquired, in his visitation, by what title religious men held parish-churches. *Mon. I. 117.*

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Abbey-lands owed a military service to the crown, as well as laybaronies and the lands of laymen; and the duty required of this abbey was to find the king six soldiers: the six knights, or horsemen, which abbot William had appointed, were for his own use and state, and distinct from the six foot soldiers, incumbent on the abbey's estates to find, maintain, and support, in defence of the realm. And it was now as formerly (when the feudal duty was extended over all lands by William the Conqueror), that six and sometimes five hides (a) were bound to find one man jointly. Oxhaie containing two hides, and Crokefly containing six and a half, found one man; Gorham containing four hides, and Rongton two hides, found one man; Childwic containing two hides and a half, and Merdon two and a half, and Sisseverne and Norton two hides and one yard-land, found one man; Burston being one hide, and Garston half a hide, and Sarret one yard-land, they were united with other estates to find a man; and other lands of obscure names found two more. But, among the names of the tenants of these lands, we find such as are, at the present day, of note in this country, to wit, *Perrot, Baldwin, Wake*.

In the time of this abbot a dreadful alarm happened from a storm of thunder and lightning. The latter fell on the top of the church, and, having melted the lead, set fire to the timber underneath; but, by good providence, there stood near the spot a tub placed there to catch the water that leaked through the roof, and this tub, happening to be full at the time, afforded means to extinguish the flames. This event is in itself so inconsiderable, that I should not have inserted it, had it not been with a view to confirm the present philosophy of an electric fluid in thunder and lightning: for, it is most probable that this inflammable fluid had penetrated through the cracks, and thereby formed a train for the fire; and the lead was melted after the fire began or in the instant of the explosion. However, the tub deserved a day of thanksgiving with a procession, but had it not.

This good abbot, whose faults or neglects are not to be mentioned, and are indeed nothing in comparison with his benefits and laudable deeds, died on St. Matthew's day, 1235; after he had thus ruled his church, in prosperity and honour, 20 years and three months. But he was not buried until the calends of March following, and then his obsequies were performed, with all possible honours, by the abbot of Waltham. Directly on the death, three chosen brethren were

(a) A hide was supposed to be as much as would employ a team.

dispatched to the king to obtain leave to proceed to a new election, and to be indulged with the quiet possession of their abbey during the vacancy ; granting the king the escheats and forfeitures, and the collating to the churches : and, on presenting the king three hundred marks, he granted their requests. But, soon after, the church of St. Julian, or Stephen, became vacant, and the king collated to it one of the brethren, named Nicolas. The king's escheator, a stout knight who lived at Hatfield and was lord thereof, came with a great posse of rustics and dependents, with intent to take possession of the abbey and all its lands, in the name of the king ; but, on being shewn the king's writ for enabling the monks to hold the same in their own hands, his lofty looks began to sink, and he returned with a grievous disappointment.

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One reason, among others, for delaying the burial of the late abbot, was, to do the greater honour to the man whom they had dearly loved ; and to allow, beside, a due preparation for the election, and the appearing of the priors and others at a distance. But, in this intent of honouring their abbot, it is necessary to shew what kind of embalming they used towards such a person : the custom then had been, and was now practised on the body of William, to wash and shave the deceased, and to remove the corpse into the infirmary ; thither were admitted only a few of the more discreet, and but one secular, who, as servant to the sacrist, was to perform the anatomic part, which consisted in making a long incision from the throat downwards, and extracting the entrails ; these were received into a broad vessel and sprinkled with salt, and the next day deposited in the church-yard(a), near the altar of St. Stephen, with great solemnity and the devotion of the singers. The body, being well washed and impregnated with vinegar, and sprinkled plentifully with salt, was sewed up : and, with no other preparation, it was kept until the burial, without being offensive.

After three days, in which the juices and moisture had quitted it, the body was cloathed ; that is, dressed in the pontifical habits, with a mitre on the head, gloves and a ring on the hands, under the right arm his usual staff, the hands placed across, and sandals put on the feet : during this formality, there was a service sung, at the door of the infirmary, containing certain collects, and the seven penitential psalms and other pieces formerly used at the death of every brother. The great bell then tolling, the body was borne into the church, being

(a) At length a small tomb of marble was erected on this spot.

placed

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placed on one of the covers, or lids, of some shrine, and bound down; the convent following in procession, all the while, and singing psalms: when the body was set down in the choir, the abbot's seal was brought forth, and, being laid on one side of the stone steps leading to the great altar, was broken at one stroke of a huge hammer; so that (to the regret of all posterity, says *M. Paris*) the image (a) and the letters were utterly defaced and destroyed. Then began a solemn service of psalmody, which continued, with great exertions and earnestness, day and night; with this intermission only, that every day a solemn mass was said at the great altar, as was practised always for any deceased brother: at the first mass the whole convent appeared in white (b), and those who constituted the choir, or singing part, were apparelled in copes; and wax-lights in great numbers were burning.

Thus did they perform the exequies, or last offices, due to their departed abbot; and, admission being given to all persons into the choir, or presbytery, they had leave to behold and mourn over their lost friend. The body remained with as vivid a countenance as when alive; and most awful lamentations were made, not only by the monks, but by the laymen who resorted to the sight. These were true and genuine sorrows; for, no man was more beloved. At his return from a journey, he was received with a salutation of profound reverence by all the monks: and the poor he received at the gate with donations and liberalities. He was used to be present at transacting all business in the chapter-house, (which was considered as a kind of council-chamber) and to attend all the services in the church, even those for private offices to any particular saint, and that also which was solemnized at midnight (c): in all which, by his ready and chearful manner of singing, he excited others to a proper and patient discharge of their duty in the same. Though he attended the midnight service, yet he never failed to assist at the matins, which was a service of twelve lessons to be read at three o'clock in the summer, and six in the winter; in which duty he always read the chapter that came to his turn and sang the responsory (d). At singing the *Te Deum* he was always the first to begin and lead the band, and, though the singers took their turns to rise and sing, the abbot was always standing, and thus animating the whole choir by his example. At the

(a) A saltire *Or*, on a field *Sable*.

(b) *In Albis*; that is, probably, in *Surplices*.

(c) Called *Completorium*, from finishing the day.

(d) Short sentences of ejaculation following each chapter.

mass sung in honour of the Holy Virgin he was ever present in the midst of the choir, habited in his mitre: and, on the principal feasts, he always celebrated the mass at the great altar. At the double feasts, that is, when two festivals came together, he attended all the time in his mitre; on common days, he appeared standing in his stall, guiding the choir and singing with great spirit; and, whenever the convent appeared either in white or in copes, (which was on particular days,) he failed not to sing the responses in the mass, at the nod of the chantor. It was the custom to bring the sick and infirm into the midst of the choir, there to receive extreme unction; and this the abbot was always attending in his seat, which was near the middle of the choir. He never received the professions of noviciates at any other place than at the great altar, which was a just and proper rule, used here ever since the foundation of the monastery.

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22d abbot.

He, on all occasions, carried himself to the potentates and prelates of the realm with most profound respect and reverence, and with a mien that gained their esteem and love. His skill and ability in temporal matters I have before shewn, together with his diligence in the care of the monastic body and the advancement of their revenues and interests. The grief for this loss was truly sincere; and, beside a mass celebrated every day for the peace of his soul, the convent thought they could not do him the last honours in a proper manner, unless they requested a man of singular holiness, and of full affection toward the deceased, to bury him. For which purpose they requested Henry, the abbot of Waltham, to perform this last office: and William, in the midst of universal sorrow and tears, was deposited in the center of the chapter-house, adorned in all his pontifical habits.

It had been customary, at the death of every abbot, to appoint an anniversary to his memory, and to grant a corrody, or daily maintenance, to one monk then newly admitted, for the purpose of celebrating mass and praying daily for his soul. This was now providing and settling, when Richard, a monk, and keeper of the church and hospital of St. Mary de Prez, came forward and demanded, for the use of the leprous women under his care, seven corrodies: for, he alleged that, 'by the tenor of the charter which founded and endowed this hospital of St. Mary, at least one new corrody should be granted at the death of every abbot, until the number amounted to thirteen (which was the number of women confined); and that not one had been granted ever since the foundation.' This claim

William the 2d abbot. claim was considered and allowed, and it made no small addition to the table of these wretched objects.

And here, because we are come to the period, in which the church and the monasteries had arrived at their highest degree of power and influence, in consequence of their having attained the summit of their wealth and affluence, we will pause a while, and take a view of the domestic œconomy of this abbey, and of the service and devotion which employed them in the church : and then shew in what relation they stood to the king, to the pope, to the bishops, and to other abbeys.

It is to be remembered that the body consisted at this time, and had consisted, from the time of William's predecessor, abbot John, of 100 monks. These were all in the same degree of rank and precedence, except what arose from the time of admission, and except that the rulers and officers (a) of the house bore some title and pre-eminence : as, next to the abbot, the *prior* ; then the *house-steward*, or *cellerarius* ; the *sacrist*, who had the care of the vestments, and provided all necessaries for the church ; and the *infirmarius*, who had the care of the sick : there were other inferior officers who had certain occasional duties put upon them, but these duties were not constant and regular.

The abbot lived in good apartments, alone, except that he had his *Bajuli* (b), or intimate and confidential friends (who served him in the capacity of privy counsellors, and were generally brought with him or chosen out of the Body) ; but he always dined in the great hall, or refectory, sitting alone at a table placed at the top of the room (c) ; the prior and sacrist were seated at the head of a long table on the right hand of the abbot, and the steward and infirmarius took their places at the head of another long table on his left hand ; which two tables accommodated all the brethren. It appears not whether they were waited on by any brethren of an inferior degree, or by the noviciates, or by ordinary lay-retainers : and probably by neither ; as their food was slender, consisting of eggs boiled hard, dried or salted fish, or roasted fowl, with some farinaceous compound : this being placed, with bread and beer, required no such change or attendants as the fancied wants of modern

(a) Obedientiarii.

(b) We may here discern the *affected humility* of the monks in their use of this word, by which the *favourites* and *counsellors* of the abbot were fond of being distinguished, although it is known to signify, in its usual acceptation, the *meanest* and *most servile attendants*.

(c) This table was called *Dais*, from *Δαίς*, Epulum.

days have invented and found needful. A profound silence was ever observed at meals, as also in the church, in the dormitory, and in the cloister; and therefore it was a gratification to be allowed to converse in the parlour, when abbot Warren gave that liberty.

William the
2d abbot.

It appears not that they had any separate rooms, to which they might retire to read or pursue any particular amusement or employment: and, indeed, so much was their attendance required in the choir that little time could be spared for any other business. We find also no school to have been kept up in this abbey, for the instruction of youth, or even for training the young monks, until the time of John Wheathampstead. The copying-room employed only two or three, and those seldom were monks: and so void of instruction were these men, after they had professed and taken the vows, that many of them did not understand the language which they sang; and it was generally considered as a proper qualification for ordaining a deacon or priest, (of which holy order here were always ten or twelve, employed in saying mass, and reading the prayers, and to succeed to the churches in the gift of the abbey,) if the person could read Latin with propriety, and be expert and ready at finding and observing the office and service for the day. Though the service was frequent, yet it was so infinite and manifold, beyond the duties of our present churches, that they seem ever to have had such a regulator thereof as is now called a *Dean*; and this office was either supplied by one of that name, or by the priest in waiting. And the service consisted so much in singing, and returned so often in the twenty-four hours, that the ordinary monks were no better than choristers and singing men; and the sanctity of their character must have arisen from the place and duty performed, rather than from any attainments in moral holiness and improvements in solid virtue.

The care that lay on the abbot was no small matter, to govern this family, which, with its necessary retainers and servants, could not be fewer than 130; beside the three hospitals near the abbey, containing about 50 persons, and the distant cells, which were eight in number (a), and maintained at least 100 more. Not to mention the frequent molestation, and injury, and violent assaults, committed by the potent laymen against the persons or the lands and property of

(a) These were *Merkgate-street* and *Hertford*, both in this county (Herts); *Hatfield-Pearrel*, in Essex; *Binham* and *Wyndham*, in Norfolk; *Belvoir*, in Leicestershire; *Tinmouth*, in Northumberland; and *Wallingford*, in Berkshire. *Beaulieu*, in Bedfordshire, was not long under the government of this abbey, as will appear in the next chapter.

William the 2d abbot. the the abbey: for, the abbot was defeated in every contest, unless he could make a friend of the king or his chief justiciary. Such was the administration of justice in those days.

With regard to the service of the church, I have shewn how much of the monks' time was employed in it: inasmuch, that the authors of so long and tedious a service seem to have thought, that monks were arrived at such a pitch of heavenly perfection as to be no longer liable to the earthly infirmities of hunger, and thirst, and bodily fatigue; without considering, that the mind will be unable to raise itself to contemplation or devotion whenever the body is ill at ease. But such was the idea then prevailing, that the whole duty of man was to mortify and purge out the old leaven, without attending to the methods of being instructed in new virtues and advanced to higher attainments of holiness. This will appear also in the nature of the service, and in the practice of this and most other churches. It is well known that there was no uniformity of worship, and no general book of common prayer, prior to the Reformation; but it had been the usage with all bishops, and abbots, and such as presided over a great conventual body, to form and to use whatever liturgy they pleased: agreeing only in this, that the canon of the mass, as being of the essence of Christian worship, was universally used in the same manner. And whatever was used in the cathedral church was adopted through the diocese; and in all the parish-churches the like liturgy was observed as far as one person could perform it, and that was in general on the Sundays only: and the practice of the abbey-church was observed by all the churches belonging to it, if the mother-church and its branches had ever obtained an exemption. But William the Conqueror had brought into England, and placed in the see of Salisbury, one Osmond, a man of great learning, and bred up in Normandy; and he composed a liturgy, for the use of his own cathedral, which came into general use, and continued in great esteem until the Reformation. The service directed by this ordinal, or missal, was in this form and manner. Every Sunday, the first business of the priest was to prepare the holy water, which was received in a vessel at the entrance into the choir; and, after repeating some short prayers to obtain a blessing, or virtue of salubrity, on the water, the priest cast into it a quantity of salt, praying for farther and more effectual preservation to reside in the same. The prayers then began with sentences of scripture, alluding to the Advent, the Nativity, the Epiphany, and the other great feasts: prayers followed, with two or three collects; and portions of Scripture, called the Epistle and Gospel. And this special service

service for each Sunday was much lengthened by singing certain psalms or hymns, and by reading four or five chapters of the Word of God. But this singing and reading was arbitrary, and appointed at the will of the bishop or abbot, and made no part of the direction in the Rubric. There were also saints days without number, and for every one there was provided a special office, in Osmond's Missal: and this office and the stated service of the day were both performed, and it was called a double festival, and had sometimes nine lessons and generally six to be read. The mass, or giving the Lord's Supper, was performed almost every day, and was a very solemn service: though it was attended with so many gesticulations and motions of the priest, as, with persons who did not understand it, would be thought theatrical. Yet this was the only service, wherein the Apostles Creed is professed or any open confession made of sin and imperfection.

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22d abbot.

In this papal worship we may behold a great resemblance to that of pagan Rome: both had altars and sacrifices; and, in the former, holy and pious men took the place of heroes and legislators: both were performed in the Latin tongue; though the papal worship was planted in countries where the Latin was a dead language, utterly unknown to the worshipper, and often even to the performer. Hence it is plain, that instruction was not the aim of the bishops and rulers of the papal church: and, though the office of matrimony was always performed, in the *betrotting* part, in the English tongue, yet they taught not the way of salvation in the same manner. We may well imagine how tiresome and disgusting it was, to such as did not understand the language, either to perform the service or to hear it: but, to those who did understand it, how little could it instruct and edify! and how little would it communicate of true comfort and satisfaction, when the senses only were entertained and charmed, and the mind left void of help! It was a kind of service that seemed to have arisen, or to have been well calculated, for more perfect beings; as resembling that heavenly harmony which shall occupy the blessed; but it was wholly unfit for edification, or to communicate the consolations of religion to frail ignorant mortals. And, though the resemblance of it in great churches is now exceeding proper and suitable to the elevated dignity of the place, yet the reformers wisely excluded it from parish-churches, where instruction and the first seeds of religion were to be sown: these reformers provided for the wants of the people, not for the grandeur of a few. Though many of the collects, epistles, and gospels, are copied in our liturgy from the ancient service; yet the latter had no prayer, or petition, so well

William the 2d abbot. adapted, so properly addressed, so interesting to the worshipper, and so instructive, as our litany.

Abbeys and monasteries, cathedral-churches and bishops' sees, were always founded by the king's charter, whoever were the authors and contributors thereunto. They may be alike considered as corporations for the better furtherance of piety and religion, and, being intended to have succession and perpetuity, they were established with all the strength and firmness which the law of the land could give: endowments also were ratified by the like authority; and, in the Saxon times, the great nobles and officers of state consented and subscribed to the same, two forms whereof I have exhibited in the Appendix, (a). Elections of abbots, and also of bishops, were originally confined to the brethren and conventual body. But, when these heads and superiors became rich by endowments, and held lands of the crown, and were placed in council on the footing of peers and nobles, then the kings became interested in the fee, and would not grant the temporalities without approving the tenant. The next step, both with the Saxon kings and those of the Norman race, was to grant leave to elect, and to recommend: and it stood on this footing (though not without interruption from the popes) until, in the reign of Henry II. the pope assumed the whole power to himself: and, though the succeeding kings struggled against this usurpation, yet the pope's authority and power generally prevailed, until the time of Henry VIII. when the legislature resumed this power, and placed it, beyond all controversy, in the regal head of the church. But, whoever appointed, the confirmation always came from Rome: and, as bishops and abbots were but different branches of the same holy church, the pope made equal claims to the right and privilege, as head and ruler of that church, to terminate and settle all disputes in the election of these subordinate rulers; and generally made them pay a good price to obtain a quiet possession.

Although the Christian religion had been received by the Britons, and was established through the land; yet we find very few traces, either of bishoprics or of abbeys, in their times. The oldest seat of Christianity seems to be Glastonbury; Banchor in Flintshire was next in fame as well as age; then probably Winchester, where a cathedral was founded and dedicated to Amphibalus, about 309; Caerleon also and St. David's were of that time: and all these were the great seminaries of the church, before the coming of the Saxons; but it is difficult to distinguish how far they were monastic institutions or secular. Lucius, a king of the western part of Britain, and, from his

name, one should be apt to suppose of Roman extraction, was a great instrument of converting his subjects to Christ; and the bishop of Rome had sent him two bishops, Paganus and Damianus, for the establishment of the gospel. This was about 189, and it is remarkable that this place, Winchester, suffered extremely in the Dioclesian persecution; though no name of great note for its piety has reached us: but, when the church was rebuilt, it was dedicated by Constantine, the bishop, about the year 309, to St. Amphibalus, who had suffered in the late persecution: so that the fame of Amphibalus was spread abroad soon after his death, but that of Alban had no regard paid to it, nor any dedication made to it, until Germanus took up the name, in a pious intention, 200 years after Alban's death.

William the
2d abbot.

But the great establishments of cathedrals and of monasteries were reserved for the Saxon converts: and it is surprizing to behold, on examination, how many of the great endowments of both were made by Austin, and his followers and converts. In the seventh century, were founded the sees of Canterbury, Rochester, London, York, Hereford, Lincoln, Litchfield, Norwich, Worcester, and Durham. In that same century, many great monasteries were likewise founded, and, indeed, in every century down to the end of Henry the Vth's reign; the number of which, of 2001. a year and upwards, was near two hundred at the dissolution; and the small ones, together with priories, chantries, and other monkish establishments, amounted to eight hundred and more. If it be asked, why there were so few of the former (*sees*) and so many of the latter? several reasons might be given; but this alone may suffice: that the former were established as the seminaries for the church, and to breed up secular clergy for the service of the country; whereas the latter were promoted by a selfish spirit, and intended to pray for the soul of the founder, and be entrusted with his interest between his death and the day of judgement: and on this principle new benefactors daily appeared, new gifts and offerings were made, and new spiritual cares were undertaken.

It may be observed that most, if not all, the foundations prior to the Conquest are of the Benedictine order. The reason is, because the other orders, as the Cistercians, Præmonstratensians, Cluniacs, Augustine Canons, Carthusians, and Gilbertines, were introduced by the Conqueror and the following kings and great men, from their principal abbeys in France, and were, in fact, only different modifications of the order of Benedict, and took their name from the reformer or from the place of their abode abroad. Each of these orders, as they presumed to call themselves, though they were but as dissenters

William the 2^d abbot. from Benedict, was under the rule and direction of a principal, called the *Provincial*, who used to convene the heads of his respective order, inquire into the state and management thereof, and enact rules for their better government. But as all the monastic bodies considered the pope as their *temporal* as well as *spiritual* head, so he claimed the right of regulating and directing their chapters, or general conventions, and of confirming the statutes therein made. Thus we shall see the Benedictines assembled by the legate Otho for amending their statutes, in the year 1238(a), and again in 1249: and it will best appear what kind of a life these men led, and what abuses and neglects had crept in, from perusing the new statutes and ordinances then given them, and confirmed by the pope: these I have exhibited in the Appendix(b), and may have occasion to mention them again under their proper dates.

Although the monks and the secular clergy were branches of the same church, yet there was continual enmity between them: one envying and maligning the other, on a supposition that the adversary enjoyed more advantages. The seculars possessed a freedom, in their parochial cures, which the monks had not: and the latter, from carrying away the tithes and owning lands and manors, were supposed, by the former, to be rich and opulent, full and easy.

(a) At the provincial chapter of Benedictines, in 1338, there were summoned to it 40 abbots and 21 priors: only 4 exempt. And 25 Benedictine abbots sat in Parliament, being usually summoned as holding baronies. (*Dug. Mon.* II. 178)

(b) N^o II. and N^o III.

C H A P T E R IV.

THE same day on which William was buried, the convent dispatched three of the most discreet brethren to the king, to intreat leave to proceed to a new election, that the household of the Lord(a) might not be damaged by a long vacancy. In the mean time, the convent were employed in seeking the spiritual aid of the blessed martyr, by making, every day, solemn processions about his shrine with their feet bare, singing the seven penitential psalms, and in prostration repeating, with the most earnest devotion, certain collects proper for the occasion. The three monks sent to the king having obtained his leave, in consequence of a handsome letter written to him and another to his chancellor, the convent appointed the morrow of the Annunciation for the day of election, and, by letter, summoned the priors to attend, they being principal members of the body. Accordingly, being all assembled on that day, they could not proceed to so arduous a business, by reason of the sanctity of the day(b) and the necessary duty therein; therefore, it was agreed to adjourn the business till Monday, and, on Monday, it was agreed to defer it, by reason of its requiring farther deliberation, until Wednesday: at last, on that day, the priors and convent being assembled in the chapter-house, they made choice of JOHN OF HERTFORD, prior of the cell at that place, a regular monk, and a man of great piety. He was presented to the king on Palm-Sunday, together with a letter of re-

John II. the
23d abbot.

(a) Grex Domini.

(b) Being Sunday.

John II. the ^{23d} abbot. commendation; and the king, out of love to the abbey and having a good character of John, gave him a most gracious reception.

The form and manner of electing an abbot was this; and practised in the case of John. Those priests whose duty and office it was to receive confessions (being three or four in number) made choice of twelve of the most upright and faithful men in the whole convent; and these twelve had the sole power of the election, taking whom they or the majority of them pleased, out of their own number, or from any other rank belonging to the monastic body.

At the last Lateran Council, held in the year 1215, a canon was made, subjecting all abbeys and monastic bodies, which had gained exemption from episcopal jurisdiction, to that of the pope: and our abbey came under that name and description: and thereupon the king wrote to the pope a handsome letter, supplicating his confirmation of this election. Three discreet monks, namely, Reginald of Booking, Nicolas of St. Alban, and Geoffrey of Langley, were deputed to Rome to present this letter. And, when they came to the pope's court, which was then held at Perusium, they found it necessary to lay a sum of money at the pope's feet, which, being immediately accepted, was ordered by his holiness to be deposited in his treasury; but neither the treasurer nor his master condescended to offer these messengers the smallest entertainment or repast: they found it necessary, also, to make liberal presents to the janitors and attendants about the court, and even to those friends of the king, to whom he had recommended them and sent letters, &c. which they ever considered as of little value (a) unless accompanied with presents. But, the messengers having obtained a confirmation and received a large portion of apostolic benediction, they returned, much disgusted with the practice of that court.

The pope's confirmation was made by a rescript to the bishops of London and Ely, directing them to examine into the merits of the elected and the form of the election; and, on discovering no fault or illegality therein, to give John admission and administer to him an oath of subjection: accordingly, on the morrow of the Nativity of the blessed Virgin, namely, the 9th of September, the bishops, finding no exceptions to be made, repaired to this abbey, and the new abbot read aloud, in the presence of the bishops, and in the audience of the convent and of the clergy and people assembled, the following oath and engagement: 'I, John, abbot of the monastery

(a) Steriles et infructuosas.

‘ of St. Alban, will, from this hour, be faithful and obedient unto
 ‘ St. Peter and the holy apostolic church of Rome, and to my Lord ^{John II. the}
 ‘ the pope, and his successors canonically admitted. I will not be ^{23d abbot.}
 ‘ of counsel, either by consent or deed, to take away their life or de-
 ‘ prive them of limb or liberty : but the counsel which they shall en-
 ‘ trust to me, either by themselves, by others, or by letters, I will
 ‘ make known to no person, wilfully to their detriment. The pa-
 ‘ pacy of Rome and the sovereignty of St. Peter I will aid and
 ‘ assist to keep and defend, without prejudice to my order, against all
 ‘ men. The legate of the apostolic see, in coming and returning, I
 ‘ will treat with honour, and, in all his necessities, relieve and assist.
 ‘ When summoned to a synod, or council, I will come, unless hin-
 ‘ dered by some lawful impediment. The thresholds of the apostles
 ‘ I will visit every third year, either in person or by my messenger ; un-
 ‘ less absolved by apostolic licence. Moreover, the possessions of my
 ‘ monastery I will neither sell, nor give, nor pledge, nor infeof
 ‘ anew, to any person, without consulting the pontif of Rome. So
 ‘ help me God, and these holy gospels.’

One of the first occasions, wherein we discern our new abbot in
 his splendor, was, in the year 1236, at the coronation of Henry III.
 who, having just married Eleanor, the daughter of Raymond earl of
 Provence, thought proper to be crowned together with his
 queen. And here the solemnity was performed by the archbishop of
 Canterbury, assisted by the bishop of London ; the other bishops
 being placed according to their rank, and, next to them, the mitred
 abbots, the first of whom was John of St. Albans : for, as Alban was
 the first martyr of Eugland, so this abbot had possessed the first place
 in rank and dignity, until deprived of the same by the abbot of West-
 minster ; the time and cause of which shall be related.

John was no sooner invested in his new dignity than he thought
 himself subjected to the yoke and tyranny of the Romish Pontif.
 He did not clearly understand what was meant by his visiting, in
 person or by deputy, the apostolic thresholds every third year ; and,
 even in the first years of his office, he was troubled with many ex-
 actions and new demands, but especially by the novel and unheard-of
 oppressions of the Romish court : and he suffered the more vexation,
 because he found that this noble church, which had ever been in-
 genuous and free-born, could have no enjoyment of its liberties and
 privileges ; and it was reckoned a presage of evil times and sad disasters,
 because, within the first three years of John’s rule, the church had
 been twice set on fire by lightning. There was fixed on the tower an

John II. the
23^d abbot.

Agnus Dei (a), being the impression of the popes seal affixed to his reſcripts and orders ; and this had uſually been thought, by the people and monks, to have virtue and power in it to guard the church from all calamities ariſing from the elements, but now they conſidered it as portending nothing but evil and miſchief.

Soon after his acceſſion, he preſented to the church one crimſon cope, for the uſe of the choir, ornamented with handſome gold fringe ; and he gave, for the uſe of the refectory, one ſilver cup, gilt, of great value both for the workmanſhip as well as for the materials.

He built a magnificent apartment for the uſe of ſtrangers, ſuch as might be denominated a royal palace (ſaith my author). It conſiſted of one very ſuperb room, painted ; and of ſeveral chambers and ſmall apartments, with a ſtack of chimneys ; and, before it, were a court and lower hall. The court was ſpacious and noble, and had in its entrance a porch, or gateway (b) ; the chambers were very handſome, with chimneys and cloſets, for the honourable reception of gueſts. A large hall had ſtood in this place, but it was much decayed in the walls and the roof, was very dark and unſeemly, and had been covered and mended with ſhingles ; whereas the new building was covered handſomely with lead. The large room and chamber adjoining were painted, and in a delightful manner ornamented (c) by the hand of maſter Richard, a very ſkilful monk of this abbey. John built alſo, oppoſite the great gate, a very long houſe, or dwelling, of ſtone, covered with tiles, and with three chimneys : the ſight and view of this building, being in the firſt approach to the monaſtery (d), added much to the beauty of the whole ſtructure. This houſe contained two floors, the upper of which was aſſigned to the uſe of the upper ſervants of the abbot, and the lower was uſed for a larder and ſtore-room. In the time of John, Stanmer, which had been one of the earlieſt poſſeſſions of the abbey but loſt by the ſloth of ſome of his predeceſſors, was recovered : and here John built a manor-houſe and alſo a very excellent windmil.

John ſuffered many oppreſſions from the great men of the realm ; and was engaged in a very expensive and vexatious conteſt with Ralph de Chanduit ; and in another with Geoffrey de Childwic on the right of Free

(a) This lamb is painted in all the compartments, or diviſions, of the cieling over the choir and preſent conſistory.

(b) Horiolum.

(c) Delitioſè redimita.

(d) On the eaſt ſide and fronting Sopwell-lane.

Warren; but he had a judgement given in his favour, by the judges (a) ^{John II. the 23d abbot.} at Hertford, though not without an expence of 1000 marks and upwards. And the persecution from Geoffrey he took ill, the more, because this man was a tenant of the abbey and a neighbour, and ought to have been its defender and protector; being the son of Roger de Childwic, who held three hides and a half of land, and was bound to find a soldier for the king, on the part of the abbot. This Geoffrey had married the sister of John Mansel, who was one of the King's privy counsellors, and in great repute and authority at court; and, by virtue of his interest, Geoffrey presumed to commit many outrages and illegalities: for, if he met at any time the abbot's servants hunting, he would rob them of their nets, dogs, bows, and arrows; beating and abusing them, though they were hunting in the king's highways or in the abbot's lordships, or warren, where he could have no right. Because, it is to be understood, that the law had ever considered the game and all *feræ naturæ* as belonging to the king: and the right of keeping and preserving the same in parks or warrens, and the right to kill, were derived from the king; and was a right always given with manors and large extensive fees, by a writ called the *Writ of Free Warren*: and thus was a right belonging to the tenant *in capite*, and to none under him.

The influence of Mansel was so great, that no justice, or remedy, against such assaults could be had at Law: so that abbot John thought proper to send William, his steward, up to court with the complaint; where, in the presence of the king and of the baronage, (which was probably the assembly of the barons,) he openly declared the grievance and injustice which his abbey suffered: but the king's justices, who were present, whispered in his ear, that there were then two great rulers at court, namely earl Richard and John Mansel, against whom they dared not utter a word.

In those days, it is to be understood, the king heard complaints and decided at a word, and performed many of those duties and judicial offices which have since devolved on his judges, specially appointed. The king then acted in his proper dignity, as the fountain of justice and of mercy: whereas, now, he is approached, too often, as the fountain of honour only, if not of power. Nevertheless, though a crowned head may be liable to many errors in his decisions, and many impositions, yet it always reflects a lustre on the character and office of Majesty, when it shews itself accessible to the complaints and grievances of the subject.

John II. the
23d abbot.

It happened, one day, that this Geoffrey, being in the road from Bedford, met a servant of my lord abbot, coming from the arch-deacon of Bedford with a present of venison for the abbot; on which Geoffrey accosts him with very reproachful language, and much heat and passion; accusing him of having stolen the venison out of the king's forest. This the servant took exceedingly ill, having been himself one of the king's domestics as a marshal, or harbinger, to go before his majesty to clear the way. Whether this marshal made any resistance in his own defence, or not, doth not appear; but, in the event, he was thrown from his horse, and the venison together with the horse taken away by Geoffrey and his attendants. On this the abbot speedily proceeded to excommunication. This sentence was denounced on him by the abbot and whole convent, and proclaimed by the clergy belonging to the churches and lands of St. Alban, and likewise by the arch-deacon of Bedford, and by all the clergy in his jurisdiction.

Contemptible as this sentence may appear to many in these days, and although it is disarmed of much of its terrors now, yet still it puts a man under so many legal disabilities, that it is, at this time, a very serious denunciation. It is analogous to outlawry. And, as the latter deprives a man of the protection, and benefit, and use, of the law, so the former deprives him of the privileges and uses of religion; he being excluded from the public worship of God, and the company and society of the faithful. This sentence cannot now be pronounced against any person, but those who are proved delinquents in spiritual courts and in matters of mere spiritual nature, and for contempt to the orders and authority of those courts. But, in the days of Henry III. when the power of the clergy was high, it might be, that the abbots possessed this power of excommunication; though they had got themselves exempt from the jurisdiction of those in whom this power certainly did reside: I mean the bishops and arch-deacons.

It seems to have been a very hasty and rash proceeding, and argues great passion and animosity, for the loss of a horse and some venison: and it may be said, that it was a civil offence and breach of the peace, and a felonious taking the goods and chattels of the abbot, and therefore cognizable before the civil magistrate and punishable by common-law process: but the channels of law were stopped by the influence of Mansel, and, Justice not finding a free course, these injured parties proceeded in their own way. If, at that time, the abbots did not lawfully possess this power, the present sentence was begun and proceeded on by the arch-deacon robbed, and from him

was

was taken up by the abbot and copied in his dominions. And, to intimidate Geoffrey the more, a second denunciation of this sentence was made, and with greater solemnity, being accompanied with a grand procession, the great bell tolling, the candles all flaming, the shrine deckt out in all its splendor, and the abbot and monks attired in their gaudiest habits. After this, Geoffrey, who had scorned the censures of the church, was attacked by the king's writ. But the abbot was mollified by the intreaties of the king and great men about court, who all appeared, as intercessors, on behalf of Geoffrey. This had been done by the craft and address of Mansel: and the abbot, finding upon consultation that he was liable to a charge of irregularity in his proceeding, consented to drop the appeal to the king in person; and thus Geoffrey escaped.

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Afterwards, by the procurement of this same Mansel, Geoffrey obtained a writ of free warren over all the lands which he held of the abbey, though in direct contradiction to ancient deeds and long established usage, and contrary to the very charter granted by the present king, and for which the abbey had given a great sum of money. The abbot, however, and his people continued to exercise their right of free warren over the lands which were included in Geoffrey's new grant, although the same were surrounded, and, as it were, inclosed, by the lands of the abbey. But a complaint of this was moved before the King, and, by the artifice of William, bishop of Salisbury, the abbot was intangled in law and lay at the king's mercy: for, by the suggestion of the said William, the king answered, that if, by his charter, he had granted the manor of another to any of his nobles or great men, though manifestly against law, it could not be allowed, 'that the rightful lord should re-enter his lordship, until the same was discussed at law and decided in court. In truth, that he ought to appear before the king and declare his right, in order that he might re-enter his manor with the more security.'

This sentence was deemed full of injustice: for, were this to be accounted law, it might be lawful for the king to enter the manor of any other person by violence, and, if that other could not beat off the invader with greater violence, he would be wretchedly dispossessed of his estate. All this was the contrivance of Geoffrey de Childwic, supported by the countenance and advice of Mansel, then counsellor to the king. But, in the year 1240, the abbot obtained of the king a writ to summon Geoffrey and his associates before the king's justices, to answer for this offence; the form of the writ appears in the Appendix (a): it came to trial at Cambridge, before a jury of

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 23d abbot, ten yeomen of common rank and twelve knights girt with swords, who concurred in giving a verdict against Geoffrey and his companions; and he was sentenced by the court to pay forty marks damages. This Geoffrey also gave the abbot incredible trouble about the estate of Newberry; for, though the abbot had bought it of the true lord and owner, in order to redeem him and his title-deeds from the hands of the Jews, yet Geoffrey so embarrassed the abbot in law that the convent were forced to demise the land over to Geoffrey, keeping and reserving only for themselves the old rent. Beside this, he obliged the convent to furnish a corrody to a young man of his appointment, before he would make any concessions to the church: which was like to prove a lasting detriment to the abbey.

Ralph Chanduit, another great man of this country, was very earnest in persecuting and troubling the abbot and monks: and, among many other enormities which he committed, (and which I here omit, says *M. Paris*,) one day in his field-sports, and near the walls of the monastery, in a place called then Derefold, he fell upon one of the abbot's principal attendants and companions, named Dunham, and beat him very severely: for this he was called to answer in Westminster-Hall, where, being asked by one, what was the quarrel between him and the abbey; *Oh!* says he in derision, *the monks have only excommunicated me, because my saddle will scarcely hold me, when on horseback.* But, soon after, he fell grievously sick, and, being near his end, he most devoutly entreated the monks to forgive him and to procure for him the pardon and aid of St. Alban; truly sensible of his fault, he promised to make retribution, and his executor, who was the prior of Miffenden, saw this performed.

It has been already mentioned that the suit about free warren cost John 1000 marks; and, by these additional troubles, charges, and contumelies, he incurred a farther expence to the like amount; so that, upon the whole, he suffered a loss of no less than 2000 marks (a): but he added to the reputation of his virtues, by shewing that he bore these losses with great patience and good temper.

The church of Hertburn, in Durham, had been, for many years before, conferred on this abbey by Walter the bishop of Durham; and this, together with the church of Eglinham, given also by an-

(a) It is probable that great part of this sum was bestowed in *presents* to the courtiers and judges. This corrupt practice was introduced by the Normans, among whom there was no approaching the great, to solicit a favour or even to demand a right, without a present. It is known to prevail through the nations of the east at this day.

other bishop of Durham, was now offered to be rented, exclusive of the vicarages, for 240 marks of yearly rent, by the prior of Tynmouth. The great tithes of the church of Norton, in this county, were conferred on the abbey, and resigned by the rector, named Lawrence, in his life-time, for the special purpose of mending and improving the malt-liquor of the monks, and for the better entertainment of strangers. The church of Heckstan, or Hexton, which had formerly been given, the abbot now appropriated for the special use of celebrating the anniversary of abbot William and himself; and to be administered by the sacrist: and he assigned the church of St. Michael, in this town, for the use of the vestry and garments, under the care of the sacrist; for which holy wardrobe very slender provision had hitherto been made.

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This same John repaired all the mills belonging to the abbey; which, having been let on covenant to be repaired by the tenants, were, by their neglect, gone to decay: these, together with the houses adjoining, he repaired with good oak timber. And because the water-mill, which was situate near the malt-house (a), was rendered useless and incapable of grinding a sufficient quantity for the house, by reason of the river being grown up with reeds and almost dry in summer, insomuch that they were obliged to send seven miles to have their corn ground, he thereupon erected a very good mill to be worked by horses, adjoining to the said malt-house. And all these repairs cost 100*l.* and upwards.

But the badness of the malt liquor, or, in juster phrase, the weakness of their ale (b), was still a detriment to them and also a reproach: and John, with great condescension and humanity, ordered an addition to their yearly consumption of one thousand quarters of malt (c), made of barley and oats mixed (d).

The pope had sent a legate, a few years ago, to reside in England, for the purpose, as was said, of reforming the monastic orders and regulating the church, but, in reality, to exact money of all the religious of all orders, under a pretence of sending relief and succour to the Christian princes, who were still fighting in the Holy Land. Otho, which was the legate's name, convened the abbots of the Benedictine Order, in 1238, to the church of St. Martin's (*Le Grand*)

(a) Braforia.

(b) Cerevisia supra modum debilis extitit. *M. Paris.*

(c) Bresia, or, Brasia.

(d) By another account, it appears that this was an augmentation made to the bread as well as beer, and did amount to the annual value of 463 marks, or 308*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*

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2. d abbot.

in London, and there gave them such rules and regulations as he thought necessary to bring back the monks to their ancient rule and discipline (a). And the same Otho was likewise in England in 1249, and assembled the abbots of this order again, at Osney (b) near Oxford; but thither came only eight abbots. On which he appointed another convention, at the church of St. Mary Overies in Southwark, an Augustine abbey founded in 1106. Here the legate renewed and confirmed the former statutes, and added some others: which, or the principal of them I have exhibited in the Appendix, N^o III. (as already mentioned) and in their original language; for the subject would appear mean and low, if translated.

In 1242, the conventual church at Waltham, a Benedictine abbey founded by Harold in 1060, having been now rebuilt, was dedicated. This church is a very fine model of Saxon architecture; simple, grand, and uniform, with semicircular arches: and indeed, it is so excellent a pattern of the original Saxon before it received its variations, and additions, and ornaments, which came into general use in this reign, that it might well be thought much older, did not this passage in *M. Paris* set us right in the date of its construction. But, in this reign, were numberless churches built; for, that of Saint Paul had been dedicated, just before Waltham, and in the presence of the same honourable personages; that of Westminster, if not rebuilt, did at this time receive great additions and enlargements (c); and, in 1240, the abbey-church at Abingdon was dedicated, and that at Wells; and the churches also at Pershore and Evesham, and at Tewksbury, Aulcester, Winchcomb, and Gloucester, in that county, were built about this time; and many more in the kingdom. And that a spirit of building new churches and rebuilding others was very prevalent towards the middle of this century, appears evident from this circumstance, that cardinal Otho, who held a council at London, in 1237, made and ordained a decree; ‘That all cathedral, conventual, and parochial, churches, which are completely built, shall be consecrated within two years, by the diocesan.’ And then it prohibits ‘all abbots and curates from pulling down old consecrated churches, under pretence of making them finer, without consent of the bishop; whose duty it shall be, to consent or not, as he

(a) See Appendix, N^o II.

(b) A monastery of Augustines.

(c) *Ampliat, dirutis antiquis cum turri muris partis orientalis, præcepit novos decentiores construi, subtilibus artificibus convocatis, et occidentali coaptari. M. Paris.*

‘ shall see fit ; and, if he consents, that he shall cause the new one to be finished forthwith (a).’ John II. the
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King Henry III. came to this abbey twice in the year 1244, and staid three days each time. The first visit was in the spring : and, during his stay, his pleasure was much abated by the vexatious rumours which were brought to him, relating to the insolent incursions of the Welch, and to the treatment of his new-appointed bishop of Chichester, who was put by and another thrust in his place without the king’s consent, this was done by Martin, the pope’s agent and clerk, and not without suspicion of having taken money for the advancement of this new man. The king’s second visit (b) was at the feast of St. Thomas, just before Christmas : and, during his devotion at the great altar, he made an offering of a very rich pall, or cloak, and three bracelets of gold to be affixed to the shrine, to the honour of the saint, and to the remembrance of himself : for, he had before, at different times, made offerings of seven more of these rich bracelets, or ornaments for the arm, which were worn by men of high rank and degree.

During this year also, the earl of Flanders who was uncle to the queen, and his brother Boniface just now chosen archbishop of Canterbury, made a visit to this abbey. They were the sons of Peter earl of Savoy : the count came over, under pretence of aiding and assisting king Henry against the king of Scotland and his invaders, and brought him an armament of sixty soldiers only, but above an hundred servants and retainers, whom, in truth, he meant to serve and provide for : the latter, named Boniface, signalized himself, afterward, by the most rigorous visitation of his province that could be made, injoining punishments and censures on his clergy, on purpose to receive money for commutation : and his exactions and enormities were such, that the clergy, by general consent, assembled at Dunstable, in 1250, and collected four thousand marks to pay the charge of an appeal they intended to make to the pope, against the impositions and extorsions of the archbishop. His visit to the abbey, at this time, was probably for entertainment ; but he had a palace at Hayes in Middlesex, about seven miles, says my author,

(a) *Spelm. Councils, an. 1237.* In this Council also was confirmed an order of the council of Paris, forbidding the reading of the works of Aristotle, newly brought from Constantinople, and translated into Latin. The books were ordered to be burnt, and the readers to be excommunicated. *Dup. 13 Cen.*

(b) *Gratiâ hospitandi. M. Paris, p. 574.*

John II. the from St. Alban's; and at this he abode, in 1250, during his visitation
 23^d abbot. of these parts.

Next year, 1245, the pope was residing at Lyons, and there holding a general Council: to this was our abbot summoned, but, being advanced in years and unable to travel, he procured an excuse; though not without sending two discreet brethren as proctors.

One of the most memorable events of abbot John's time was the compromise, or agreement, which was made in 1247, between the Bishop and chapter of Durham on the one part, and our abbot with the prior and convent of Tinmouth on the other. For, the prior had refused obedience to the bishop, and pleaded a general exemption from his jurisdiction, by virtue of that immunity by which the parent-abbey was freed from any subjection, or obedience, to the bishop of Lincoln.

This priory had been founded by Robert de Mowbray, the stout and warlike earl of Northumberland, who, in a certain hostile invasion made by the Scots under Malcolm their king, in the conflict and defence of his country slew the said Malcolm, and gave him honourable interment in the church of Tinmouth which the earl had newly built. He afterwards lost his eye-sight: and, choosing to retire from the world and quit its business as well as its vanities, he desired to be admitted a monk in the abbey of St. Alban; he accordingly assumed the habit and life of a monk, and abode here many years, and, at his death, was interred with suitable pomp, in a place not far distant from the chapter-house, on the very spot where abbot Symond afterwards built the chapel of St. Symeon; the body lying in the midst thereof, or somewhat nearer to the altar. This happened in the time of abbot Paul. But the earl caused the parish-church of Tinmouth to be erected into a priory, and sent a number of monks from St. Alban's abbey (a) to constitute a convent. In like manner, during Paul's time, the cell at Hertford had been founded and endowed by a great man, named Robert de Limisi, that at Belvoir by another potent chief, named Robert de Tothenei, and that at Wymundham by William de Albany (b), butler, or cup-bearer, to King Henry I.; and the cells at Bingham and Wallingford had been constituted by Paul himself, and annexed to the parish-churches.

(a) *Tanquam ab electissimâ domo inter omnia cœnobîa Angliæ. M. Paris.*

(b) William's son became earl of Arundel: and, beside other descendants, the last of all in the male line, named Hugo de Albineto, a very young man, was buried at this cell in 1243; and, at his death, the inheritance was divided among four sisters.

But to return : the prior of Tinmouth having rejected the authority of the bishop, the pope, on application of the bishop, issued a commission of inquiry with orders to adjudge ; and, the case being heard by the archdeacon of Stow and the chancellor of Lincoln, it was by them determined, that the west end of the church, where the people assembled for divine worship, and the prior also when there officiating, should belong unto and be subject to episcopal visitation ; but, when as prior at the other end of the church and at the head of the convent, he should then be exempt : that the priors should be placed there by the abbey, and be removeable by that authority ; but should be presented to the bishop for institution to the vicarage, and should swear canonical obedience : and that the rights of the abbey should remain unimpaired and inviolate. So that the exemption, which had been granted to the parent, was allowed to belong also to the daughters and offspring : though, without such original grant of exemption, the abbeys and priories were subject to their diocesan, were visited and reformed by him, and reckoned a branch of the episcopal charge : the parish-churches also, subordinate to the abbeys and priories, were subject to their respective bishops, if they had no monastic institution affixed to them.

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Beside the several orders already mentioned as being established in England, and the two military orders, (the knights templars and hospitallers,) there started up, in this reign, two other religious orders, taking their rise about 1219, and surprizing all the world by their wonderful increase and advancement. These were THE FRIER-PREACHERS and THE FRIER-MINORS : or, as they were more usually called abroad, the DOMINICANS and FRANCISCANS. They had been raised by the encouragement and suggestion of the pope and court of Rome, in order to opposte the Albigenes and Waldenses who then combated, with great courage and much learning, the doctrines, the power, and the extorsions, of the pope. For this purpose they were directed to supply all the defects of the other orders : instead of leading a silent and holy life in the cloister, they were to preach and travel about, warning the people against the pestilence of those heretics, and they were to exhibit the perfect life in a course of poverty and patience, to work whenever they could, and, when otherwise, to support themselves by begging. Hence they were called *Mendicants* : and, though always begging, they were seen, about 1243, to be possessed of the most ample buildings, and dwelling in princely houses (a), and surpassing

(a) Hubert de Burgh settled the preachers at Whitehall.

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all other orders in their wealth and full establishment (a). For, with all these professions of beggary, they found means to be admitted into all families, contrary to the monastic practice, and assiduously attended the death-bed of the rich and great; thus excluding the secular priest and the authority of the bishop, and extorting confession and urging the sick to make their will, with a certain recommendation of their own order, in preference to any other. Insomuch, that none of the faithful thought themselves in the way of salvation, unless they were ruled by the counsels of these frier preachers and minors.

They got admittance in the council of the kings and great men, and became earnest solicitors for new privileges: and their extreme success and sudden rise soon made them the objects of hatred and envy with all the other orders, and no less contention and animosity prevailed against these friers than against the seculars. They now began to be great masters of theology, and to dispute and hold exercises in the schools with a skill and ability before never seen, and with a degree of subtlety and depth that was neither becoming the subject (b) nor expedient for proving the truth. They were, in short, the authors of that scholastic jargon, which, as a new science, then pestered the schools, and which was so managed as to confound and perplex an adversary, whenever it failed to convince him. The frier-preachers had monasteries and abbeys all over England, being brought in about the year 1221, and placed first at Oxford; but, at the dissolution, they had forty-three houses in the kingdom. The minors, so called from their affected humility, came hither in 1224, and had their first house at Canterbury and the next at London; and, at the dissolution, they possessed no less than fifty-five houses, in this kingdom, under seven principal rulers and guardians residing in the chief cities.

(a) *Prædicatio per Prælatos, maxime vero per Fratres Prædicatores et Minores fiebat: et data fuit potestas cruce signandi & votum, datâ pecuniâ, relaxandi: sese multi, quorum non erat numerus, cruce signaverunt. Sed cito in tantam nobilitatem, ne dicam arrogantiam, elevabantur Prædicatores et Minores, qui spontaneam paupertatem cum humilitate elegerunt, ut recipi curarent in cœnobiis et civitatibus, in processione solenni, in vexillis, cereis accensis, et in dispositione vestimentis festivis indutorum. Et concessâ est eis venia multorum dierum suis conferre auditoribus: signatosque hodie, cras, datâ pecuniâ, a crucis voto absolverunt. Parvoque tempore, facta est tanta commutatio, tam multiformis pecuniæ exactio, nec sciri poterat in quam abyssum tanta pecunia esset demersa.*

(b) *Qui non verentes tangere montes, nitebantur Dei secreta investigabilia temere perscrutari. Deo plus placet firmæ fidei simplicitas sobria, quam nimis transcendens in Theologiâ subtilitas: et cum tutius sit, simpliciter a Patribus tradita accipere et credere, quam probata experiri. M. Paris, an. 1243.*

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These orders were not only well directed and instructed in executing the pope's commands, but they really did supply the imperfections of all the other orders. For, as teaching and instructing prevailed much among the heretics, it was a prudent injunction to cause these orders to make that their chief duty and care; and, by their assiduity therein, they crushed or cried down all their adversaries. Indeed, a new dawn of learning and ingenuity seemed now to be rising up, and some coeval circumstances, new but important, gave aid and encouragement to these men. The canon-law had been the principal subject of study for two or three centuries; but, about this time, the civil law was coming into repute and use, by the discovery of the Pandects, at Amalfi, in 1130; and the works of Aristotle, which had not been known in Europe except among the Moors and Arabian scholars, were now brought out and recommended by all public teachers: the last were probably brought from Greece by the Crusaders: but, as soon as known in England, they were translated and read, and became the standard of all philosophy. These two orders embraced this new learning, and, with wonderful diligence and study, recommended it by public lectures, &c. About this time also, colleges began to be founded in our universities; and the most learned men for two or three centuries were of these friars, as Bacon who died in 1292, Kilwardby, Grosstead, and others.

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Though the important events in religion, in learning, and in civil polity, which these orders either produced or were intimately concerned in, (for they meddled with every thing) would amply justify this seeming digression, yet the immediate reason of mentioning them here is this: they were not only the preaching defenders of the papal faith, and employed to infuse an universal prejudice against the heretics, who had appeared in the south of France and in the mountains of the Alps, but their business also was to exact money and goods for the pope. And some of them, coming to St. Alban's in 1246, demanded admittance and the liberty to receive the monks to confession: the principal of the company demanded also a privilege to preach, and, requiring silence for that purpose, the archdeacon stopped him and said; *Gently, brother, and forbear a little, until I shall have shewn your wisdom what my opinion is. We plain men, who have been accustomed to ancient and approved usages, are filled with wonder and astonishment at these innovations. You not only affect to be frier-preachers, but frier-confessors also: nay, you would extort a confession. But let me shew you what the decree is, on that head, made and ratified by one of the greatest councils ever known (namely, of Lateran, in 1215); and which has been held sacred and inviolable throughout Christendom.* And, opening the book, he read thus: 'And
' let

John II. the 23d abbot. ' let every person of either sex make faithful confession of their transgressions, alone, and once in the year only. And, if any person shall chosse to confesse to a strange priest, let him first demand and obtain leave of his own proper priest; since, otherwise, the strange priest can neither bind nor absolve him. But let that priest be discreet and cautious, that he may pour wine and oil into the wounds of the guilty, and so wary, that he do not, by any means, betray or discover an offender; because, whoever shall presume to discover any thing confessed or spoken in the penitential trial, we not only decree that priest to be deposed from his sacerdotal office, but to be thrust into some close monastery, there to undergo perpetual penance.'

The year after in the beginning of lent, came a certain frier-minor, named John, to the abbey: he had been employed on this business all over England, and now he introduced himself here with a demand of forty marks, by apostolic authority, to be paid at London at the feast of the decollation of John the baptist; and he produced new mandates from the apostolic see for this purpose: for, the abbot, having had the like demand made upon him last year, had appealed to the pope and cardinals on a grievance so insupportable. The minorite then summoned the abbot to appear, on the third day after, at London, or appoint a sufficient proctor, well instructed on his behalf and prepared to make full satisfaction to our lord the pope, in the subsidy now demanded. On the day, the abbot sent his proctor, namely, his archdeacon: and the first thing he did was to demand a sight of the new mandate, or commission; which having, with some difficulty, obtained, he found it to run in this form: ' Innocent, bishop, &c. to our beloved son John, the abbot of St. Alban's in the diocese of Lincoln, health and apostolic benediction. The daily pressure of that secular persecution, wherewith we are surrounded, compels us, by its vehemence and danger, to make head against it in defence of the apostolic see, and, of necessity, to have recourse to the aid of its subjects. Wherefore, agreeably to the counsel of our brethren, we exhort and attentively admonish you, and by the sacred writings we charge you, that, so far as our beloved brother John, provincial guardian of his order and our messenger, being the bearer of these, shall propose or request, on our-part, a subsidy for our holy see, you would give full credit to his words; and that you carefully observe, that the church, by supporting this opposition, is effectually maintaining the general interest of the church and of all church-men; and that you will freely and liberally study
' to

‘ to fulfil your duty herein, in such a manner as will be most acceptable to us and our brethren; and that your actions, as the best evidence of the truth, may appear as the tokens of your devout affections. Given at Lyons, IV. Id. Oct. in the fourth year of our pontificate.’

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It is to be understood, that the popedom had been at war with the emperor for several years. The Emperor, named Frederic, did not take so interested a part in the Holy War as many other of the European princes, and, finding the popes encroaching on his sovereign privileges in Italy, he had maintained a vexatious war on the apostolic see: and, by the secular persecution which the pope here complains of, he means this imperial war. Indeed, every war was an occasion, with his holiness, to demand money; for, while he fought only as a sovereign prince of Italy, he yet considered himself as the head of a spiritual kingdom: and, though possessing the *whole* of the *other* world, he was not above contending for a *small portion* of *this* world. The Holy War had been a plausible ground for exactions and extortions, for near two hundred years; yet another urgent occasion or plausible opportunity was not to be missed: and, for this purpose, the pope had sent four cardinal legates, one into Germany, a second through Italy, a third into Spain, and a fourth into Norway, to solicit aid; beside some sham legates into other places: and, that he might not seem to infringe the royal privileges in England, he employed here the frier preachers and minors: they were pressed into his service much against their will, and esteemed it a scandal and detriment to the honour of their order to be made tax-gatherers and criers (a). It is farther to be remembered, that in 1239 the legate Otho had been at our abbey, and, in great solemnity, had excommunicated the Emperor, by virtue of an authentic then sent by the pope; but, for which act, the abbot and monks sent a letter of excuse privately to the emperor, alleging that the fact was not done with their approbation or consent.

The archdeacon having read the mandate above written, frier John enjoined him and his attendants to be and appear before him at the same place, eight days hence, then and there to satisfy him in three hundred marks of silver; otherwise the mandate of our lord the pope would be executed with excommunications and interdictions. The archdeacon answered, that the abbot was employed in sending some special messengers to the pope's presence, in order to lay his

(a) Telonarios et Bedellos. *M. Paris*, an. 1247.

John II. the ^{23d} abbot. grievances before him, and to make satisfaction in proportion to the abilities of the church and its dependences, but with no view of receding from the appeals preferred before.

Soon after, to depress and afflict the English church more and more, John produces a new authentic, or power, with enlargements of his authority, in this form, ‘Innocent, bishop, &c. having understood by the intimations which thou hast written, we charge thee, by the authority of these presents, that if the major part of the English prelates should make answer, on thy demand of the subsidy requested by us, that they are exempt or foreign, thou dost demand a greater sum from them, and compel them, by ecclesiastical censures, to withdraw their appeals: *any privilege or indulgence notwithstanding*, and although we mention not those privileges. Given at Lyons, XVI. Cal. Aug. 1247.’

Such demands, made so frequently and enforced with so much artifice and violence, against which neither the privileges of holy men nor the grants or indulgences of former popes could defend them, spread an universal alarm. A fear instantly arose, lest princes or great men among the laity, who had by themselves or their ancestors founded, endowed, and enriched, many churches out of their possessions, and had mutilated their estates in so doing, and had framed written grants of the same, should revoke those grants and resume the estates; having the pope for an example and the tenor of such and such a charter *notwithstanding* (a): especially when, contrary to the intention of the founders, these possessions were devoured by the pope or by such Italians and strangers as he sent over to fatten on the sweets of England. And, whenever the exactions of the pope were complained of, which was done in every public council or meeting in the kingdom, it was observed that the Italians enjoyed preferments to the amount of fifty thousand marks of annual value, and yet, by reason of their absence and negligence, their houses and buildings were falling to ruin.

The abbot and his monks, seeing themselves enclosed on all sides by danger, determined to send two proctors to quicken the appeal with the pope, and destined for this negotiation a monk, named John Bull, and master Adam Bearn, a laic; but John the minorite, pretending he should soon quit England and return to the pope, sent another mandate to the abbot, in this form, ‘To the most venerable John, by

(a) This clause of *non obstant*: is the greatest usurpation ever devised, and subjects all law and all former assurances to the present will of the pope.

‘ the Grace of God lord abbot of St. Alban, frier John; our lord the ^{John II. the} pope’s messenger in England, health in the lord. Although we have ^{23d abbot.} written to you many times before, we have determined to write still once more, having received a strong mandate on this head; intreating you and admonishing, and, by virtue of our obedience to the pope, giving you to understand, that, all obstruction being removed, you be and appear, on the Thursday before the feast of St. Thomas, at Beresford, the dwelling-place of the frier-minors, there to make full satisfaction unto the church in the subsidy. By doing so, you will not oblige us (which God forbid !) to proceed according to the tenor of a former mandate; nor will it be proper to dismiss you, because we have received a special mandate thereupon. Fare ye well. But, what ye shall think proper to do in consequence of this, we will, that you write unto us by the bearer of these.’

The abbot pushed on the appeal, choosing rather to abide the decision of the pope, who was reckoned the most excellent of men, than of one, who, under the covering of so much humility and poverty, harboured such asperity and cruelty. The messengers to the Romish tribunal were ordered to be there by the fifteenth day after the feast of St. Michael. John doubled his threats: the arch-deacon and some others were sent to him, to moderate his rigor; he answered, that the strictest justice, which his authority would allow him to shew, he would fully employ and exercise; and for this reason, because, when he was at St. Alban’s a few years before, the monks had not shewn him so much reverence as was due to a papal messenger, much less to a legate; yea, that although he had been entertained in a civil and courtly manner with regard to his table (a), yet some of the monks had presumed to reprove him, as if he had changed his habit and run away from some other order. At length the deputies from the abbot, with bended knees and most suppliant words, intreated some respite and a kind of truce until some intelligence should arrive from their proctors at the pope’s court. This they obtained; but, in the expediting of their business, frier John promised them no kind of aid or favour, and it was discovered, that he had written to the pope, inflaming his mind, and alleging that the abbot of St. Alban’s was the only abbot of all England who kicked, with most perverseness, against the pope’s mandates and edicts. The deputies at Rome, on this, found great obstacles thrown in their way, and such difficulties created as made their longer stay necessary: At length, by means of presents,

(a) In esculentis et poculentis. *M. Paris.*

John II. the 23^d abbot. and bribes, and conduct-money, properly applied, they made an end of their business, and compounded with his holiness for two hundred marks. But thus, by the venality of the papal court and the necessary charges, three hundred marks were swallowed up in that insatiable whirlpool.

The whole sum raised in this manner, and remitted through the hands of the bishops of Winton and of Norwich, during this year only, amounted to eleven thousand marks; and no mitigation or favour was now shewn to the abbot, although he had, in the year before, remitted to the pope four-score marks.

There is nothing so remarkable, through this long reign of fifty-six years, as the vanity and levity of the royal character, and the crafty uses made thereof by the avaricious and griping hands of the popes. And, if the people then could have felt their strength, or could have found any principles of true liberty, they never would have borne the unjust extortions that were practised, by turns, by both the royal power and the church; for, they had the policy to act in concert, and, whenever either wanted money, a kind of consent was asked of the other: and, though the king seemed to take part with the great lords, and to favour all their complaints of grievance from the church of Rome, and to join in all their remonstrances to the pope; yet the latter ever found a way to divide the union, and, by drawing off the king, to leave the barons and the laity at the papal mercy. At this time it cannot be said, that the constitution of the kingdom had in it any free parts; it had indeed two independent powers, which frequently jarred, and were generally oppressive; but it was without a third, to balance the weight of either that might preponderate with excess: and these two were *the royal authority* and *the papal power*; which last, being planted in every parish and every corner of the kingdom, supported the interest of the Romish church in a more effectual and more active manner than all the king's ministers, officers, and placemen, could use in support of the regal authority. Parliament as yet consisted of only the greater barons, whose number probably did not exceed fifty; and as many of the lesser barons (a) as the king chose to summon; and of eighteen bishops, and twenty-eight abbots and priors. How weak then must have been the civil interest compared with the ecclesiastical, even supposing the king to be friendly, at all times, to his barons and people, and to the secular interests!

(a) That is, such as held of the great barons.

In the theory of the constitution, the king was but the first baron of the kingdom, and placed at the head of the rest, as the chief of a confederacy, or combined interest, and intended as their leader in war and their legislator, in conjunction with them, in peace: but, though this parliament, or great council, could and did enact laws for the benefit of the realm, yet the spiritual part had such an universal influence as to hinder the execution of the most salutary, when they chose to oppose them. And there were infinitely more assiduity, diligence, and energy, in executing the decrees of Rome, than the laity could employ in putting in force any laws of the great council. The æra of the first rise of the Commons, that is, in fact, the time when the king omitted the lesser barons, and summoned to parliament two knights of a shire and two burgesses for the cities and towns, was in the 49th of this reign, or the year 1265. And this might probably arise from a salutary hint given to the king, that such a step would enable him, if he took part with the barons, to resist with effect the papal and ecclesiastic influence. For, the barons, who were as much subjected to the grievances and impositions of the clergy and legates as the lower ranks, might think that, by adding to their own number, they might draw off the king from siding with the pope, and enable him to act with such a degree of weight and influence as would conduce to his and their honour and credit. It is to be remarked, that, whenever the parliament, or great council, was convened, the pope's legate, or commissioner, came to London to assist, and was as powerful to bring the lords to compliance as he was to master the bishops and clergy.

The current of court favour had run, many years, towards the Poictovins and the queen's relations, and they had experienced wonderful bounty and munificence from the king; while the pope, at the same time, was sending over all the necessitous Italians to be provided for with preferment in the church: for which abuses in government, the king met with the most severe, but just, rebukes from some of the barons, when assembled and consulting in Parliament. In consequence of these complaints, the king, in 1258, issued an order to every county, that the people should choose four knights, to take into consideration such grievances as the lower ranks felt from the oppressions of the higher; and that, having written down the same, they should inclose them under their seals, and bring the same to the baronage, or general council: and, in seven years after, these persons were called up, by writ, to have a seat in that assembly; where, from being considered as deputies to report the state to the counties, they now ac-

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quired a right to appear as the representatives of them. And this augmentation of two hundred votes, if adhering with fidelity to the king and civil power, would give a new turn to the decisions of that great body.

But this account, though attended with great probability, is not the whole truth : for, the barons had been in arms the year before ; and, in 1265, happened the battle of Evesham, wherein fell Simon Montfort ; and, though a parliament was called at Winton by the advice of prince Edward, the business of it seems to be only to disfranchise the Londoners, who had borne arms against the king. The war continued in 1266, though confined chiefly to the isle of Ely, where the disinherited and fugitives from the city had taken refuge, but were compelled to surrender ; and, in 1267, my author expressly says, that the king caused the earls and barons, the archbishops and bishops, the abbots, and all who owed him military service, to come armed unto St. Edmundsbury, to concert measures against those who, contrary to the peace of the realm, had seized the isle of Ely : and, in this number convened, are thought to be comprehended the above-mentioned knights of the shires. It appears not who it was that suggested this expedient to the king, or whether he intended by it only to strengthen his own numbers ; but certain it is it tended to add strength to the nobles, and laid the foundation of rendering the king and the civil power more independent of the pope and the clergy.

The king's excesses had indeed subjected him to great necessities, and he had thereupon taken part with that power and influence which bore a sway in every part of the kingdom, though to his disgrace, yet with some relief to his wants. For, when he called a general parliament in 1248, for the purpose of asking a subsidy of money, he was sharply reprehended in these terms ; ‘ that he blushed not to demand a relief, ‘ when he had given a written charter to his nobles, promising never ‘ to do them such injury as they had complained of ; that he was ‘ highly blameable in his indiscreet invitation of strangers, among whom ‘ he wasted, profusely and prodigally, all the riches of his kingdom ; ‘ that he contracted in marriage the nobles of the realm with ignoble ‘ foreigners ;’ with many reproaches on the waste and extravagance of his household.

And, in 1249, when he came to this abbey, (on a kind of progress by way of Huntingdon, whither he called to him the abbots of Ramsey and of Peterborough, and had begged a sum from them,) he intreated abbot John to let him have sixty marks ; *for*, he added, *it was as great charity as to give an alms at the abbey-gate* : yet, in this same year

year and in the last, he had obtained a good sum of the abbot by his artful pretences. And, having succeeded thus with our abbot, he sent Simon Passelaw, a clerk of his treasury, with a circular letter, to all the abbots and priors in the counties of Essex and Hertford, to ask money for the defence of his civil rights, both at home and abroad. These requests, though so much like extortions, could not be refused by this abbey; because the king honoured this place frequently with his presence, and presented habits and ornaments of great value, and, in 1251, he came down twice, and made an offering of three robes made intirely of silk, which, with others before given, amounted to thirty in number: he gave also at this time two necklaces of great value, directing them to be fixed to the shrine, as a memorial of his liberality.

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And, to shew what shifts the king, urged on by his necessities, had in contemplation, I will relate the following interview. In the year 1252, the prior, or hospitaller, of Jerusalem, then dwelling in Clerkenwell, taking an opportunity of speaking to the king, made complaint of some grievous injury he suffered, and cited the charters of protection which former kings, and even his majesty, had granted; on which, the king, in great heat, and with a high tone of voice, accompanied with an oath, cries out, ‘ You prelates and religious, especially the templars and hospitallers, have so many liberties and charters, that your superfluous possessions make you proud, and your pride makes you mad. There wants a prudent resumption of what hath been so imprudently granted; and there ought to be a deliberate recal of what hath been given without any deliberation. Doth not our lord the pope sometimes, nay oftentimes, revoke his deed? doth not that little bar, called *non obstante*, vitiate and annul all former grants? In this same manner will I break this and other charters, which my predecessors and myself have rashly and inconsiderately granted.’ To which the prior, with a high look, answered spiritedly: ‘ What doth my lord the king say! far be it from you, that any word so absurd and unseemly should come out of your mouth: as long as you observe to do justice, you sustain the character of a king; but, as soon as you infringe justice, you cease to be a king.’ ‘ What means that?’ said Henry, ‘ what! you English mean to serve me as you did my father; first turn me out of my throne, and then worry me to death?’

In 1255, he affected to make war on the king of Scotland, and, having assembled some soldiers, harrassed the borders of that country; on which, the monarch of Scotland thought proper to purchase peace, by giving Henry a great sum of money: yet, on his return, he stopped
at

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at Durham, and caused all the money and plate, belonging to the abbey and cathedral church, to be taken as spoil, and carried away for his own use; though he afterwards did make some restitution. In the mean time, Rustand, a deputy from the pope, was demanding money from all the bishops and abbots, and six hundred marks from our abbot, on pretence that it was for the king's use; during which, letters came to the abbot from the pope, directing him to pay to certain merchants five hundred marks within one month, otherwise the abbey would be put under a sentence of suspension: and thus, if they consented, the abbots were put under a pretended obligation, to which they had not agreed. But it is likely that the pope or king had taken up this sum of the merchants or usurers, and then gave the lenders such a sort of authority to indemnify themselves, if they could. The bishops were convened at London by general consent, to make answer to Rustand's demand, and at first were ready to divide and separate; but the barons encouraged them to be unanimous, and offer a sum to the king; meaning thereby to save themselves. And this artifice satisfied Rustand. In 1256, the king issued a proclamation, directing that all persons, who possessed 15l. a year in land, should learn the use of arms; otherwise redeem themselves for a sum of money. And, to mention one instance more of the king's dissipation and want of faith, he promised the young earl of Gloucester, who was going to betroth his majesty's niece, the daughter of Guy earl of Angouleme, five thousand marks; and he demanded of the abbots of St. Alban, Reading, and Waltham, that they would pay down the money: they answered that they were not able, nor, if they were, could they justify such an act. Then he applied to the templars and hospitalers; but they refused: and from that time he plotted against them.

I have said thus much of the necessities and the exactions of the king and the pope, in order to shew the prudent zeal which the barons felt, and which excited them to take up arms in defence of their rights, and to establish a more just government. The good effects of which zeal and courage we see in the regulations and improvements that took place in the next reign, under one who had been an eye-witness of his father's excesses, and had fought in support of him. The king's debts amounted at this time (1256) to 950,000 marks or 633,333l. 6s. 8d.

This year, the king and queen of Scotland came into England, to visit the English court, the queen being the daughter of Henry and his queen. They came with about three hundred attendants on horseback. The place of meeting was the royal mansion of Woodstoke, which

which not being sufficiently capacious for such a retinue (for, Henry ^{John II. the} brought a thousand persons with him), the ground adjoining was co- ^{23d abbot.} vered with tents and pavilions. They proceeded to London by different routs, for the better convenience of entertainment and lodging. At London these royal personages were met by prince Edward, and, after much royal festivity, they were entertained, together with many others and the chief of the city, by John Mansel, at his house in Totale (since call *Totbill*) fields.

Some other material events of John's time, which particularly concern this abbey, or which (though but remotely connected with it) serve to display the manners and customs of that age, I will relate in the order in which they happened, without attending solicitously to the immediate connection of the detail.

In the autumn of 1247, a pestilence, or epidemical illness, raged so much in the town, that nine or ten corpses were interred, every day, in the church-yard of St. Peter.

In 1248, the bishop of Bangor, with many of his clergy, took refuge in this monastery, finding it dangerous to stay in their own country of North Wales, where the disputes of the sons of Llewellyn had spread war and desolation, to the terror of all pacific persons (a). In this year also, Matthew Paris was requested by the decayed monastery of Holm, in Norway, and directed by an authentic from the pope, to go and put in order the business and rule of that abbey, which had been founded by Canute, on his return from England, and which, out of veneration to St. Alban, he had furnished with monks and relics from this abbey: the high character, which Matthew bore with the pope and among all the benedictines, caused him to be chosen for this purpose; and, having passed the summer in Norway, he returned safe.

This year, the king's brother Richard, earl of Cornwall, who had taken the vow of the cross and had provided for his departure, came to the abbey, to request their prayers and intercession with Heaven for his success, and, after a few days, departed. This man bears a great

(a) The bishop of Hereford had done the like, about twenty years before, and died in the year 1245: his name was John, but his surname is unknown, and he is not mentioned in Goodwin's catalogue. He seems to have been the bishop that had the contest with Peter Egelblanke, who, being a Savoyard, was favoured by the king, and excluded John the lawful bishop. This John, in consideration of the reception and kindness shewn him for twenty years, left his books and some church-ornaments to the abbey, and also some benefices: he was interred just before the altar of St. Amphibalus. *M. Paris*, p. 604.

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character throughout history (a): and, as he was the owner of Berkhamstead castle and lived there, and was a benefactor to the cell of Beaulieu then belonging to this abbey, it is not improbable but that he was well acquainted with the abbot, and that the cause of his visit was in friendship to him as well as devotion to God. In 1250, the lady of this earl, named Cynthia, was delivered, at Berkhamstead, of a son whom they named Edmund, and in honour of whom the father, in 1257, founded and endowed the monastery of Askridge, in Bucks, for thirteen friers of the *Bonhommes* (b).

The priory of Beaulieu (*de bello loco*), at Moddry, in the parish of Clophill in Bedfordshire, had been founded by king John, but left incomplete: and, in Henry's reign, this abbey replenished it with monks, by removing thither those of Melbrook cell in the same county; and it was afterwards farther endowed by the above-mentioned Richard, the king's brother, in completion of a vow which he made in extreme danger abroad. But, in the year 1250, it ceased to be a cell under the management of this abbey; and, in consideration of some equivalent, it was conveyed over to the said earl, who obtained of the king and pope a charter of incorporation under the name of an abbey, and placed therein thirteen poor brethren and twenty monks of the Cistercian order from Winchcomb, in the county of Gloucester, which he had before augmented with new endowments. Richard paid this reverence to Beaulieu, through a motive of piety to his mother, whom his father, king John, had caused to be buried there (c).

The frier-preachers had settled themselves in a large and commodious house in Holborn (d), then called the suburbs of London, and, in 1250, they held there a general chapter of their order, at which appeared about 400 abbots and principals; for, they were convened from all parts of the Christian world, and some came from Jerusalem. Their poverty and wants were so great, that the nobles, and bishops, and some of the abbots, sent them large supplies of provisions: among the

(a) He was afterwards chosen king of the Romans, and died at Berkhamstead in 1271, for grief at the death of his eldest son Henry, who was murdered in Italy. He directed, that his *body* should be buried in the church of the frier-minors at Oxford, and his *heart* deposited in the monastery of Hailes, in Gloucestershire, which he had built and endowed.

(b) On the death of Richard, this Edmund was created Earl of Cornwall by Henry III. and, in 1283, he enlarged and farther endowed the religious house at Askridge, founded by his father.

(c) *M. Paris.*

(d) Holborn was never paved till the time of Henry IV. from whom issued an order to that purpose. *Kymer's Fæd.*

rest,

rest, abbot John and the abbot of Waltham sent a large portion. On the first day of their chapter, the king entertained them at his own charge, and, having entered their assembly, prayed them to remember him in their supplications. The next day, they were entertained at the expence of the queen; and, on the third, by the bishop of London; and then by John Mansel.

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In this year, 1250, the church of Westley belonging to the priory of Binham being vacant, the pope sent thither an Italian, and gave him possession, to the great loss and vexation of the abbot and brethren. Another vexation was, that the manor of Aldenham (which had always belonged to this abbey, and had been so confirmed by many kings and by Henry himself, and was, at this very time, *leased* to the abbot and convent of Westminster) was now conveyed, by a new grant, to the said abbot, in perpetuity, to the great loss of our abbey: and, more than this, although Geoffrey of Childwic had been cast in the suit about free warren, yet the king now granted him a charter to that effect. And Matthew Paris remonstrating to the king boldly on these matters, on visiting this place, the king answered, "Why? doth not the pope this very thing, subjoining in his letters *notwithstanding any privilege or former grant* (a)? however, I will 'think of it.' Yet nothing more was ever heard of it, nor did the king's actions correspond with these promises.

Robert de Gorham, who had been elected abbot in 1151, had granted certain lands, contiguous to Westwic, to one of his family and name. That man settled there and built, and the place obtained the name and appellation of, *Gorham Bury*, that is, the house and dwelling of Gorham: and here a good family had continued: William Gorham, the last who died here, left a widow, named Cecilia Sanford, sprung from a good family, dwelling at Sandford, one mile from the town of St. Alban's. This lady, having been well educated, was chosen in her younger days to the office of preceptress to Joan, the sister of king Henry, who became the wife and relict of William Marshal the younger, afterwards earl of Pembroke, and was married to the earl of Leicester, Simon Montfort. Cecilia, together with this countess of Pembroke, being both widows, made a vow to continue in this widowed state, and, together with the sponsal ring, assumed that mournful garb, then called *Ruffet*, from the colour and plainness. The countess, being wooed by the earl of Leicester, applied to the pope

(a) *Non obstante*. This dispensing power was creeping into the civil transactions. *M. Paris*, in an. 1250.

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to be absolved from her vow ; which having obtained, she left her companion alone. Cecilia continued single, and, on her death-bed, the priest, who was Walter, abbot of St. Martin's in London, spying a valuable ring on her finger, ordered the attendant to draw it off, as no longer necessary, and indeed superfluous to a dying person. Cecilia, though dying, recovered breath enough to say, '*No, good father! I will never quit this ring, either living or dead: I will carry this ring with me to the tribunal of God, as a pledge of that continence which I swore to my husband, and there demand the retribution which we covenanted; for, for his sake, I have refused many offers of high rank and great fortune.*' Then, grasping the ring, she breathed her last.

In the same year, 1251, died Paul Piper, a man who, from a small beginning and humble origin, raised himself to a great office at court, called the *Regisdapifer*. When he first began to taste the sweets of the court (a), he had only two hides of land; but in a short time he had gained, by some means or other (b), fifty hides. He had shewn himself a great builder of mansion-houses, and had now nearly completed a magnificent dwelling at Teddington, with all conveniences of use and splendor, such as raised the admiration of the beholders, having employed so many men and artists, that the weekly wages came to one hundred shillings, and oftener to ten marks (c). He left a widow, but no child: and John de Gray, a knight well-bred and of distinguished courage, married the widow, and came into the sudden possession of that place and all the fortunes of Paul Piper. The ruins of this great house are still to be discerned.

This same year, and about the feast of St. Michael, notice came to the monks, by letter, that a visitation was intended to be made by Theobald prior of Hurley in Berkshire, and James the sub-prior of the Augustines church in Canterbury, who was also one of the pope's chaplains. Our abbot demanded a truce, as it was then called, that is, a delay, or respite, until the Sunday next before the day of all saints, promising to amend all defects and correct all enormities before that time. The two visitors appeared on the day appointed: and, the next day, the sub-prior entered into discourse with the monks, in the chapter-house; then he shewed his creden-

(a) Lambere curiam.

(b) Licenter et illicenter.

(c) Allowing money to be then twenty times more valuable than at present, this weekly expenditure will amount only to 133l.; a sum not greater than is often seen in modern days.

tials, or commission from the pope, called his authentic; and, lastly, ^{John II. the 23d abbot.} caused the statutes to be read in public, which had been enacted at the last general provincial assembly, held at London, of the Benedictine abbots. And, having found nothing amiss, although they made very strict enquiry of the monks in private, after a stay of four days, they departed. Soon after, some of the monks of this abbey were directed to make the like visitation to the abbey of St. Edmundsbury in Suffolk. And, in the end, abbot John made the like kind of satisfaction to the convent, in the matters promised by him, as his predecessor William had done, when he was visited by the abbots of Boxley and of Begham. But neither of them made good their word: for, they had both promised some amendment to the monks table, in detriment to their own; and that the portions of meat, which they had denied to the sick and changed into an allowance of wine, should be restored. But, when the visitation was completed, these amendments were no longer thought of by the abbot.

In 1252, a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning happened, at a time when the queen was regaling herself and children in this abbey. The lightning struck the chimney of the queen's chamber, and shivered the same to pieces, and shook the whole house: it set fire to the laundry, and left visible marks of its effects on the walls. Some frier-preachers, who were accustomed to be entertained or lodged here, in their daily travels, and would not be restrained longer than to receive refreshments, did now set forth in the midst of the tempest, and were extremely terrified before they quitted the town, thinking they saw, in the path before them, a flaming torch or a drawn sword. Three large oaks, growing in the church-yard, and of such circumference as three men could not grasp, were torn up by the roots: and, in Windsor Forest, thirty-five large oaks were overthrown or shivered to pieces. About this time Alan de Zouch, the king's chief justice of Chester and of the Welsh district near Chester, was travelling to London, and stopped at this abbey, for rest and entertainment. He was bearing to the king no small treasure, which he had collected, on his account, in Wales and Chester: and the same was conveyed in carts drawn by two horses.

In this year also, died John de Basingstokes, arch-deacon of Leicester, a man of great experience in common and uncommon learning, and fully accomplished in the Greek and Roman literature. This John had intimated to Robert (Grossthead) bishop of Lincoln, that, when he studied at Athens, the Greek doctors had shewn him something that was quite unknown to the Latins; and that was a

John II. the 2^{3d} abbot. the book containing the testaments of the twelve patriarchs, a work of great repute in the Greek libraries, though the Jews, through envy of the manifest prophecies therein contained concerning Christ, had endeavoured to hide and conceal it. On which, the bishop sent into Greece, and, having obtained the book, translated the same from the Greek into the Latin tongue (a). This same John was the first man who brought into England the knowledge of the Greek numerals, and shewed their meaning and signification : in which, says my author, this is most wonderful, that a single letter may be made to represent any number ; which obtains not, adds he, either in the Latin or the Arabic tongue. This learned arch-deacon translated also a Greek book into Latin, wherein was comprehended the whole power and mystery of grammar ; and which the Greeks called *Donatus*.

About the same time Richard de Wendover, a physician of note and eminence at London, died, and bequeathed, as a legacy to this abbey, a curious crucifix of ivory ; it acquired its value from having been the property of pope Gregory, to whom the said Richard administered and served in the office of physician ; and the dying pope bequeathed to his dear friend what was, and had been, most dear to himself.

In this year, also, the above-mentioned bishop of Lincoln obtained a rescript from the pope, directing him to augment the vicarages to a proper maintenance : for, the religious, who had been the authors of all vicarages, still took the whole tithe to their own use, that is, of their monastery, and made no provision for the officiating brother : and this was the case, whether the gift of the vicarage was in the bishop, or the lord of the manor, or even in themselves. This rescript is dated at Lyons, the eighth year of the pontificate of Innocent. After this, the bishops obtained a power of making adequate provision for a brother or a secular priest, to enable him to reside ; and, by degrees, they procured, that no vicarage should be instituted, or any church served, *vice alterius*, unless an endowment was made, out of the tithes or of land, by the lord of the manor : and this was not done without licence from the king and the bishop. And, at a synod held at London, in 1268, under Othobon the legate, it was decreed, that all the religious, whether exempt or not, who enjoyed an appropriate church, should, on a vacancy, present a clerk to the bishop within six months ; and, in failure, that the bishop should appoint a vicar (b).

(a) Printed at Paris in 1549, and in the *Bibliotheca Patrum* ; thought, by Drs. Cave and Woodwell, to have been written in the first or second century.

(b) *Coh. Ecc. Hjs. I.* 475.

The king visited this abbey, together with his eldest son Edward, at the feast of St. Bartholomew: they entered the church with great solemnity and made offerings of rich palls, bracelets, and gold rings, and of twelve talents beside (a); the king directing, that they might convert these valuable articles into money, if they pleased, provided the same was laid out in ornaments for the shrine. And this same year, on the first day of October, was the church of Ely dedicated, after the venerable bishop Hugo had constructed, at his own charge, the presbytery and the fine tower adjoining.

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On the translation of the Holy Edward, now the 13th of October, the king convened all the bishops of England to London, and there laid before them a papal mandate, signifying, that his holiness had conferred on the king the tenths of all ecclesiastic benefices through the realm for three years, to provide the king all necessities for his peregrination to the wars in the Holy Land; the tenths to be raised, not according to the old valuation, but by a new estimate, to be formed according to a strict enquiry, made by the king's officers (b). This demand raised the admiration and surprize of all present; and the bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grossthead, gave vent to his indignation, with a spirit of freedom, honesty, love to the church, and loyalty to his prince, that would have done honour to a man in any age, when kings and popes were most powerful and assuming. It is foreign to this history to relate the progress of this contest. But the result was, that the bishops, by a steady opposition, maintained their refusal; and the king discovered, that the season was too far advanced toward winter to allow his peregrination. The bishops had told him, 'that he had taken the mark and vow of the cross with no other view but, as his father had done, to extort money on pretences; that, although *his subjects* in Gascony had complied, *they* could not, since it had appeared, that an act, once repeated, was next called a custom, and would give sanction to a third and fourth deed of the like kind.'

While these grave matters were transacting at London, scenes of a ludicrous kind were exhibited by the king's half-brothers at Hatfield and at this abbey. William de Valentia, who lived in the castle at Hertford, broke into the Park at Hatfield, then belonging to the bishop of Ely; and, having diverted himself in the chace, he came to

(a) *M. Paris*. It is not easy to ascertain the value of this sum; but, as the word *talentum* occurs, in the writers of the middle age, to denote sometimes a pound and sometimes a mark, it is very probable that *Paris* here uses it in some such sense, and not to express a sum of higher value.

(b) *Satellites et extortores*.

John II. the 23d abbot. the house, and, with his companions, broke into the cellar, and committed great riot and waste. Another brother, named Geoffrey de Leizine, came, in a very imperious manner, to this abbey, and, together with his attendants and horses, occupied the whole monastery, and, during his stay, utterly subverted the order, regularity, and solemnity, of the place. My author says, who then lived on the spot, that the strangers stable, which would hold three hundred horses without inconvenience, did not suffice this riotous prince's retinue.

In the year 1253, a clerk and special counsellor of the king, named Walter de Satindon, made a donation to this abbey of the church of Hartworth in Nottinghamshire, valued at 300 marks a year; in consideration of the great expences maintained by the abbey: and, this year, the abbey discharged a great debt wherein they had been bound to a Jew of London, named Elias, on behalf of Richard de Oxhaie, a knight: and it caused great joy to recover their bond out of the chest of Elias.

Boniface, the arch-bishop, had gone to Lincoln to attend the funeral of, and pay the last duties to, that good bishop, Robert Grossthead, deceased; and, returning, intreated the abbot to give him entertainment on his journey. He had been refused admission at the priory of Belvoir, because it claimed exemption; the petition therefore was for rest and refreshment, to which the archbishop was admitted, and was entertained; but he entered not the cloister, nor made the least pretensions to the authority of visiting the abbey.

In the year 1254, while the king was in Gascony, the kingdom was left in the hands of the queen and earl Richard. These regents ordered a fine and amercement of 100*l.* to be restored to the abbey: this fine had been imposed, by the king's justiciary, on the abbey and the liberty, because some persons of this jurisdiction did not obey a summons to come to Cheshunt. For, by the charter which constitutes the liberty, no man was obliged to go out of the liberty for justice, or to appear before other justices than those of the liberty, and who were made and appointed by the abbot. This grant of remission (a) is a clear proof that the liberty did exist, as a distinct jurisdiction, in this year 1254; although *Sir Henry Chauncey* says, it was created by Edward IV. But the true time of its creation was in the reign of Henry I. by grant to abbot Geoffrey, as already mentioned. However, as I am now on the subject of this liberty, I will mention the following instance as a farther proof of its existence at this time. In 1269, some persons of Dunstaple, who had been accustomed to robbery and plunder, stole

(a) See the Appendix, N^o V.

twelve oxen from the farmers dwelling at Colney, and drove them away. The owners pursued and took one of the robbers at Redburn, and, having brought him back to this town, charged him with the crime before the bailiff of the liberty, (the same who is called the feneschal in the grant of Henry I.) who, having read to him the king's grant and the power vested in himself, caused him to be tried, and he was convicted and suffered death as a felon (a).

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The bishops at length consented to grant the king the tenths, on conditions: one was, that the regulars, or religious, should pay and contribute a tenth of their goods and movables: and another, that the money should be faithfully applied to the relief of the Holy Land. The bishop of Norwich, named Walter de Suffield, and who had long been an exactor of the taxes, &c. for the king, came now to the abbey, and convened before him the rectors and vicars of all the churches belonging to the abbey, and the wardens, or guardians, of all the churches, even of St. Julian's, of St. Mary de Pré, and of Sopwell. He required also all the officers of the abbey, and even the almoners, to appear before him; and charged them, on pain of another more strict inquiry, to set a value on all the goods and movables under their respective care, the tenth of which he caused to be paid instantly. And, about this time, the tower of St. Peter's church was struck with lightning, and the timbers shivered to pieces.

The king had given three of the most pre-eminent churches in England to his wife's relations and his own; but not one of those was worthy or fit for such a rank. The queen's uncle, named Boniface, had been made archbishop of Canterbury for some years, but lived chiefly abroad and engaged in the secular affairs of the continent. Hereford had been given, in 1239, to Peter de Egleblanke, a Savoyard and near relation to the queen. And, at Winchester, the king had caused, by compulsion, the monks who composed the chapter to choose Æthelmar, one of the king's half-brothers. This man quarrelled with his chapter; and, with a wanton sort of folly, shut up some of them in the cathedral, and kept them without food for three days. When he released them, they all left the convent and church; and the bishop made choice of the meanest wretches he could find to supply their places. But some of the exiles took refuge

(a) About the same time, the cell at Merkgate-street, called *St. Giles de Bosca*, formerly built and endowed by abbot Geoffrey, was assaulted in the night by fifty robbers, and the nuns pillaged and robbed of every thing valuable; but, the alarm being given, some of the robbers were taken; and the country-people rose, with great zeal and diligence, to apprehend and bring to justice the rest.

John II. the
 23d abbot. in the abbey at Reading, and many others in our abbey of St. Alban, and were here sheltered and protected. Indeed, the violence, which raged in those days, and which the wanton humour of the great was pleased to exercise towards their inferiors, and especially towards men of a religious character, made such places as abbeys a most comfortable refuge for the persecuted: for, all places that could afford sanctuary, though sometimes abused, were yet necessary and prudent retreats, while powerful men were fierce, savage, and revengeful. Our abbot John had a brother Thomas, who died archdeacon of Northumberland; who, with Richard, late bishop of Chichester, was eminent in rank, and they were of the like fame and merit (a). These two had been educated, with Edmund the pious archbishop of Canterbury, at University college in Oxford. The life of Richard was composed by Matthew Paris, and laid up, he says, in the library of the abbey; he being a man of eminent piety, and canonized, in 1247, five years after his death. Thomas was famous after his death, as was likewise the bishop of Lincoln, for the miracles said to be performed at their tombs; an account of which was reduced to writing, and also deposited in the said library (b). But both these books have been lost.

In 1256, an extraordinary tempest, accompanied with great and uncommon rains, had so swelled the river Ouse at Bedford, that the banks were overflowed, and many houses, mills, and bridges, demolished. Among the rest, it is supposed that the church, in which the illustrious Offa had been buried, with all its contents, was washed away. The abbot and convent, on the day of the martyrdom, (viz. June 17, which day they had always observed with some solemnities, and caused the priors and clergy to assemble here for that purpose,) passed a decree, in full chapter, that, for the future, a more solemn service, with a particular prayer for the rest of Offa's soul, should be celebrated. And here I must remark, that it is somewhat strange, the abbots and rulers of this great and religious institution could be content to suffer the body of the founder to rest, for near 500 years, in a very obscure church, liable to the fate which at length snatched it away. But their attention was entirely confined to Alban, whom they loaded with honours; while they forgot their benefactor and friend, the author of all their enjoyments.

In this same year, the pope's instruments and exactors made some demand on the abbey, and enforced that detestable clause *non obstante*,

(a) *M. Paris*, 1253.(b) *M. Paris*, anno 1255.

in opposition to all the pleas, rights, and grants, which John could ^{John II. the 23d abbot.} allege: on which the abbey was put under an interdict, the service of the choir ceased, no bell was tolled, and morning and evening prayers were read in private in the chapter-house. This lasted fifteen days, when, probably, the abbot complied or a compromise took place.

About the end of this year, it was found necessary to repair or rebuild the east end of the church; (now contiguous to the passage :) and, in opening the ground, the workmen discovered a stone-coffin, which, by the inscription, contained the true remains of the pious Alban. It was discovered between the altar of Oswin and that of Wulstan, where the matins were usually said, and where had stood an ancient painted shrine, and under it a marble tomb, or coffin, supported on marble pillars, and which place and tomb had been called the tomb of St. Alban. Here had the holy martyr been interred on the day of his death, about 970 years before: by which it is plain that the prosecution, in which he fell, was in the year 217 of the Christian æra. And this discovery was made in the presence of the abbot, and of the bishop of Bangor, and of Philip de Chester, a principal counsellor of earl Richard: there were present also all the convent, (and of course the writer of this article, *Paris* himself,) and some noble persons belonging to Lord William de Valentia, and great numbers of pious people, who heard of this extraordinary fact (a). Miracles were said to be performed at the new coffin of Alban: and *Paris* relates, that a boy, on such a day, was raised from death, and then another; and that many were cured of blindness, and of the palsy. But this is not the way in which the miracles of Jesus and the apostles are related: nor doth there appear any reason, on this occasion, for any miracle, when no person was incredulous or hardened in old attachments and opinions. The variety of these miracles may also be suspected, because a profit was derived from them, and the more votaries the more offerings; contrary to the effects and consequences of the miracles related of Jesus.

In 1257, in the beginning of March, the king came to the abbey, and made great offerings to the shrine, of a curious and splendid bracelet, and valuable rings, and a large silver cup gilt, in order to deposit therein the dust and ashes of the venerable martyr; he gave also six robes of silk as a covering to the said old monument, and to cover the tombs of two famous hermits buried here, named Sigar and Roger. The king continued here a whole week, and conversed much

(a) It is probable that this discovery was, in reality, only a contrivance, with a view to gain credit to the pretended miracles, which began to be reputable with the vulgar, and gainful to the monks.

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with *M. Paris*; making him his companion at table, and in the audience-chamber, and in his closet, or private room: and, in discourse, he spoke much of the success which was then like to attend his brother earl Richard, in being chosen king of the Germans, or Romans; and who were the persons that would espouse his interest. He would also run over a list of former crowned heads in England, who for their sanctity had been canonized. He could name a long list of the baronies in England; and by his memory recite the titles of 250, which was thought to be the whole number.

During his stay here, there came from Oxford nine masters(a) of arts, deputed from the university, (which then consisted only of University college, for, Baliol was not yet founded,) with a complaint that the bishop of Lincoln, in whose diocese Oxford was, gave great disturbance to the scholars. The petition was presented to the king in the chapel of St. Oswin; where, Paris being present, he boldly besought the king to have regard to the church, now in a tottering state. 'The University of Paris,' said he, 'which hath bred so many learned prelates, is now grievously troubled: and, if Oxford should suffer the like, which is the second school, nay the foundation of the church, I fear the whole fabric will fall to ruin.' 'God forbid,' says the king, 'that it should happen in my time: I will prevent it.' And it is supposed he took the part of the university.

The disturbance at Paris was this: the frier-preachers, contrary to the usage and custom of the university and of the city, insisted on reading theology; and opened schools for that purpose. The king and citizens opposed this innovation: but the friers, being encouraged by the pope, and always testifying implicit obedience to him, succeeded in the dispute; and thus waged a verbal war with the poor Albigenses. The great success of the two orders, that had been set up by the pope in the beginning of the century, gave rise to other orders; a new one appeared now in England, cloathed in sackcloth: and *Paris* says, the number of orders was such, and so great, that nothing but disorder was seen(b). Henry had, some years before, founded the small abbey of Netley, near Southampton, for Cistercians, and another at Titchfield, not far off, for the same order, or for the Premonstratensians. The former now began to grow considerable; and were the first of all the ancient orders who disdained that contempt into which they had fallen, and who, having obtained of the pope the privilege of opening schools at Paris, began to rival

(a) Novem artifices.

(b) Tantus ordinum numerus, ut non nisi confusio videretur. Ad an. 1257.

the new orders in their studies of theology, and the exercises founded thereon (a). And it began likewise, about this time, to be a practice with Henry (which was adopted and extended by his successor) to grant protections to such monasteries as seemed too much borne down by the legantine power, or to be otherwise oppressed (b).

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About the decline of the summer, the extreme wet weather caused a general alarm for the safety of the crops, both of hay and of corn: and it was feared that both, being delayed longer than usual, would be spoilt: the abbot therefore, in full chapter, decreed a general fast and humiliation through every parish of the archdeaconry, with prayers for the special blessing of fair weather; and ordained, that a solemn procession should be made, attended with the shrine, from the church to the little church of St. Mary de Pree. This the abbot and convent performed, with all such pious persons as would join in the solemnity; and all walked barefoot.

Soon after, the queen came down, accompanied with the wife of prince Edward, daughter of the king of Spain, and made an offering on the altar of a rich cloth, called *Baldokin*, or tissue of gold.

In this year, 1258, the parliament having refused the king's request in asking for money, he procured a pope's messenger to come over, named Manfuetus, to get aid of the abbeyes and churches. This man goes to the abbot of Waltham, and by intreaties and threats obtains a security for 250 marks, which the king could procure of the merchants; then came Simon Passelaw, a counsellor of the king, to this abbey, pretending that he had rode all night and was just come from Waltham, and hoped our abbot would follow so good an example: at this instant came a messenger from Waltham, relating what had happened there, and to put John upon his guard. Our abbot therefore resolutely refused: and Simon Passelaw took leave; but he went to Reading and to other great abbeyes, though with what success it appears not. This was doing and transacting at a time, when, from the badness of the corn and scarcity also, a great pestilence was raging in London among the lower ranks of people; and in this spring there died 15,000 of them.

Another fraud of the pope's messenger was discovered at this time, by the death of Bernard de Nympha: this man, though a clerk and dependant of earl Richard, had been employed as one of the pope's collectors and exactors. And, at his end, there was discovered in his

(a) Ut scholas exercendo in theologia, legibus, et decretis, studerent liberius, ne inferiores viderentur. *M. Paris.*

(b) See Appendix, N° VI.

John II. the custody a chest full of Papal bulls, rescripts, and orders, already
 23d abbot. sealed, but quite blank.

The archbishop this year notified to the abbot, that he intended to come and hold an ordination in the great church. The abbot pleaded the exemption; and, especially as the see of Lincoln was vacant, it might be considered that his grace was representing by that act the ordinary of that diocese; and therefore, he hoped, his grace would hold him excused if he could not permit him. On which the archbishop held the ordination at Dunstable: but, in going and coming, he was received and handsomely entertained at the abbey.

Soon after, the king came down, and, during his stay, a more solemn procession than ordinary was directed, within the walls of the church: the convent were habited in their best attire; the saint was borne, that is, the whole shrine that was moveable; and the king walked in the train. In 1259, the frier preachers, having received one small house as a gift at Dunstable, took possession, and assembled in great numbers: though professing poverty, they manifested great wealth: and, though designed and pretending to be ever begging and wandering, they settled themselves at this place in a large convenient building, now erected by them; to the great loss and detriment of the prior and convent there, established in the time of Henry I. and by that king. On a sudden they prepared a place of worship, set up an altar, and, without waiting for any regular licence, performed divine offices. They were encouraged by cardinal Hugo, a brother at Rome, and great privileges were granted them. They continued to build, and engrossed much of the land which before had paid rent to the priory; and usurped all the oblations which had used to be made to the priory-church. But that which more immediately concerns our abbey is, that these frier-preachers, when they first settled at Dunstable, betought the charity of the prioress of Markgate, who at that time was Agnes de Gubion; she relieved them with a certain portion of corn, and this continued during her time. When a successor came, the friers demanded it as a right: and, as the history mentions no contradiction, it is probable the charity was continued (a).

In the year 1259 died MATTHEW PARIS, the pride and glory of this monastery; second to none in his days in all reputable learning; and as conspicuous for his piety and virtuous conduct. He came early into this house, and might have been placed in the abbatial chair when John was elected, had he not declined the honour, through fear that it would involve him in care and trouble, and prevent him from recording and writing his great history. We are in-

debted to his industry for all the intelligence of facts prior to his death; as we are to his example for a knowledge of what was posterior: for, in imitation of *Paris*, and to render his history and lives more complete, Wendover and Rishanger continued the same to the death of Henry III. in 1272; and Walsingham, who lived here in the reigns of Henry IV. and V. resumed the history of the abbots, and composed their lives, from John of Hertford inclusive, to the death of Thomas de la Mare(a). This history hath never been printed; nor was it ever seen by Chauncey, or Camden, or Dugdale, or Stevens; and probably read only by Hearne, who hath printed some slight extracts. It will therefore furnish us with much authentic new information of this abbey, from the death of Paris(b).

The abbey had not been entirely without learned men to record their transactions, both before and after *Paris*: for, before his time lived William, a monk, in 1170; and Walter, another monk of some fame, in 1181; both of whom are mentioned among the learned of the English Benedictines. And, in the beginning of Henry the Third's time, Roger de Windsor had been appointed historiographer by the direction of the abbot, and with a salary from the king; an usual practice in all the great abbeys.

The historical collections of *M. Paris* contained all the notes and remarks of this Windsor; and he continued these to his own death, digested in annals: a fair copy of this is now in the MUSEUM, among the *King's MSS.* written in *Paris's* own hand, and was probably the original whence *Matt. Parker* printed in Elizabeth's time, and which *Dr. Watts* printed from in 1684; an exceeding good hand, but much abbreviated. Rishanger continued the remarks, but noted only civil and state events, unto the death of Henry III. He was historiographer unto Edward I. and II. and died in 1312; yet nothing more

(a) Cott. MSS. Claud. E. 4.

(b) *Walsingham*, the continuator of his history, gives him the following character.

Eodem quoque temp. floruit et obiit dom. Matt. Parisiensis, Mon. Eccl. St. Albani; vir quidem eloquens et famosus, innumeris virtutibus plenus, historiographus et chronographus magnificus, dictator egregius, corde frequenter revolvens. Otiositas illuminata est splendore animæ: quem quidem ubi fecerat iniquum presentia cogentium partibus remotis. fama reddiderat divulgata commendatum: hic v. r. a multis retroactis temporibus usque ad finem vitæ suæ chronica diligenter colligens, gesta magnatum tam secularium quam ecclesiasticorum, nec non casus et eventus varios mirabiles in scriptis plenariè redegit; mirabilemque ad posteros notitiam præteritorum, reliquis certificationem. Inerat et tanta subtilitas in auro et argento, ceteroque metallo, in sculpendo et in picturis depingendo, ut nullum post se in Latino orbe creditur reliquisse secundum. Igitur exemplo ipsius opibus infudemus salubribus incessanter, ut cum ipso premiis remuneremur celestibus. Cott. MSS. Claud. E. 4.

John II. the 23^d abbot. of his writing has been discovered or has been ever mentioned : and, if he left nothing, this shews a reason why Walsingham, in the time of Henry V. took up the history from the death of *Paris*. There is also, among the same MSS. a most uncommonly fine copy of the *Historia Scholastica*, and probably the very same which, *Paris* says, had been written and procured at great expence, for the use of the church : and, subjoined to the same, is a copy of Grosthead's translation of the patriarch's testament, in the hand writing of *M. Paris* (a).

In the year 1260, and on the day of St. Alphage, (now the 17th of April,) John of Hertford died, having ruled the monastic body twenty-five years, and was buried in the church with a pomp suitable to such a prelate. This abbot conducted himself without any manifest partiality to his parents, relations, or friends ; and, unlike some of his predecessors, forbore to enrich or even to gratify them by dissipating the goods or effects of the abbey, either in wanton liberalities or prudent donations. He had conversed much with all the other prelates of the realm, and ever shewn himself a mirror of religion, and an example of the most mature and sober judgement. He was given to hospitality and munificence, and had gained the love and esteem of all persons by his facetious and pleasant discourse : and many of the nobility, who lived out of the kingdom, recommended their children to his care and custody, to be educated and trained up by his directions.

He had lived in times of great trouble and vexation. Henry had often shewn himself very adverse to the nobility and prelates in matters wherein *Magna Charta* had granted them great privileges : and, as we have seen, the king and the pope were ever thirsting for gold, and, on one pretence or other, harrassing the great for subsidies of money. Many of the prelates were much exposed to their exactions, and forced to live abroad : those of the king's kindred did this by choice. But John had always governed with extreme prudence, to be able to escape the vexations and afflictions which many others had suffered.

The crusades had caused great intercourse between England and the western parts of Europe with Palestine and Greece ; through which last country the armies and leaders often passed, and sometimes made long abode there in their passage : and, in 1204, Baldwin, earl of

Flanders, by help of the Latin arms, was made the head of the Grecian empire. By this commerce and communication, many books and manuscripts were brought into the West; and many monks and new institutions of foreign orders were introduced into England, the monasteries abroad having merited favours of the leaders and commanders, from having given them entertainment on their long journeys to the East. And this accounts for the numerous foundations of monasteries in England, during the time of the Crusades; that is, in the period from the end of Rufus to the beginning of Edward I's reign, or from 1100 to 1272: during which time (if the great abbeys that were dissolved amounted to 200) above one half of that number are found to have been established. And it is ascertained, by historical record, that the Carmelites were brought into England, in 1240, by John Vesey and Richard Grey, and fixed by them at Alnwick in Northumberland and at Aylesford in Kent, having been driven out of their habitations on Mount Carmel by the Saracens.

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The thirteenth century produced many great events: it was distinguished by the high power and pre-eminence of the popedom, and by the institution of the two new orders who were intended to supply all the defects of all the other orders. Although the council of Lateran, in 1215, had decreed, with universal consent, *that no new order should be established or created*, yet the exigence of the times gave a sanction to the frier-preachers and frier-minors: and the world beheld these men, not like the drones who lived on the honey of the land, but active and busy, learned and ingenious; preaching and declaiming against heretics, and raising a degree of admiration and consequence which had not been seen before in any of the monastic orders. It was a wise institution for the purpose intended: and every possible encouragement was given to these men by the popes, to manifest to the world that they were as learned and as zealous for religion as the Albigenses and Waldenses. Many circumstances concurred to make them conspicuous. The Pandects, containing the renowned law of the Romans, had been brought into England in the time of king Stephen; Gratian's Decretals and the Canon Law, which had been studied at Bologna only, and was now taught at Paris, the only flourishing university in the West of Europe, found its way into England; and the works of Aristotle were new in this part of the world. The sciences contained in these books, together with the Fathers, furnished all subjects that were reputed worthy to be called learning, wisdom, and religion. Schools were opened by those triers for the instruction of youth, and they procured other universities to be founded: the bishop of Ely, Hugo
de

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de Balsam, now collected the scattered students of Cambridge, and founded the first college, by the name of St. Peter, in 1257: the like was done at Oxford in 1262 by Baliol: and future founders went on upon the same plan; all calculating for the furtherance of knowledge, and more effectual teaching of arts and science. Hence arose those many ingenious men, called the schoolmen; as, *Albert the Great*, at Cologne; *Peter Lombard*, at Paris; *Thomas Aquinas* and *Bonaventure*, in Italy; and *Frier Bacon*, at Oxford: all whose works are so numerous as to discourage a reader, and we scarce know what they contain; yet we are certain they were the standard of divinity and philosophy, until the revival of Greek and Roman literature. I have made these remarks on purpose to say, that nothing of this new-fashioned learning was yet admitted into this abbey; that it had not more than two or three ingenious men within its walls, in this century, beside *M. Paris*; that learning and science were foreign to their institution, and useless to their occupation, which was to renounce the world and all the concerns of the living, and to contemplate, pray, and intercede for the dead.

Now, whoever reviews what hath been here written, and it is written with a most faithful regard to truth, must be convinced, that these monastic institutions were not founded, in any age, with a view to ease, indulgence, and gratification: for, while they observed their rule and maintained the same strict form of worship, they could not be liable to a suspicion of that nature. Yet, when at length, in spite of all their public utility(a), any small deviation or remissness of duty was observed, this was enough to raise a charge against them, among such as envied their possessions; even though these lay reformers and zealous accusers were themselves guilty of more irregular and more criminal conduct. In the theology of those times this was reckoned the most perfect life, and probably men embraced it upon principle, and with a sincere dedication of themselves to the worship and service of God: but there is no part of that mystery of iniquity, which Christ and his Apostles foretold would work, more visible and conspicuous than the worship and devotion of these monks. Indeed, where no instruction was used or allowed, they faithfully believed, and zealously adhered to, such doctrines as they found already

(a) At first sight this expression may appear exceptionable: but, when it is recollected that these foundations instructed the young, entertained the traveller, fed the poor, and nursed and cherished the sick and aged, at a time when neither schools, nor work-houses, nor hospitals, were established, it will be agreed that their utility was considerable.

taught. Their general duty was to mortify themselves : and, with surprising patience, they submitted to the painful duties of fasting and watching ; but their occupation they ever considered as being devoted to the service of the dead. And it is wonderful to behold, how much more diligent they were to serve the dead than to benefit the living : the latter they left in a great measure to the parish-priest ; but their own peculiar province was to be factors for the dead, and to render them all possible aid and succour by their prayers in this world. The popes and rulers of the Christian church at Rome had framed a very ingenious plan of doctrine to this purpose : and, setting out upon the pagan notion of an inherent and natural immortality of the soul, they had devised and established a system of proceedings upon all departed mortals, by which they had made the dead still subject to the laws of the church. They filled up that undefined period in man's existence with many and interesting events : they devised a state of purgatory, whercin all departed souls were supposed to be purifying by fire from the pollutions contracted in life : they assumed to themselves the power of the keys, or, as they explained it, a power of passing judgement on departed souls, and inflicting a heavier or lighter punishment on them. The passage of Scripture, that mentions the power of the keys, intimates no more than an admission into the church of Christ by baptism, or into Heaven by repentance ; and implies that the terms of admission, as practised by Peter or others, should be regarded and respected in the future judgement of those persons at the last day ; that whatever obligations of duty and obedience the apostles should lay on the converted, or whatever forgiveness and pardon of sin they should extend to the penitent, according to the promises and conditions of Christ himself, the same sentence should be regarded and inviolably kept by Jesus himself, when he had power in Heaven, or should come down to judge the Earth. The popes therefore, fancying themselves pre-eminent to Peter, and to be the vicars of Christ, assumed greater power and authority, and framed something of a code for the better governing these invisible and distant subjects. This power, of binding and loosing, they exercised in its fullest extent. They taught that men were unavoidably doomed to that place of purgatory, and, for their certain sins and infirmities, were bound to undergo the pains and penalties of it : and therefore they did not add to these severe inflictions, and bind on them stricter terms ; but they chose to exercise the more pleasant and gracious part of this papal prerogative, that of loosing and remitting part of their punishment. Hence arose the contrivance of

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indulgences, which are remissions of the pains and penalties there inflicted; and, if this act of grace was at first extended toward the dead, it soon found its way, in the papal chancery, to be useful and beneficial toward the living: and then indulgences began to be sold, and persons who were anxious of their future welfare paid money, to obtain a respite for a number of days. The first business was the employment of the monks, who acted as a kind of attorneys, to secure the interest of the departed; and for this they always received the payment first, either by a legacy from the deceased, or by a certain rent or pension payable out of his estate, and secured as a demand on the heirs. The latter method, that of obtaining a respite, and which is properly to be called indulgence, was practised by the pope on all emergencies when he wanted money. And this was a main expedient used against the Albigenes and Waldenses, who had affected to deride and to confute these impositions; yet he raised great sums of money by the sale of them (a), and kept down the growing power of those people: for, it seemed, that the purchasers set a greater value on a falsehood for which they had given money than on a truth which they might receive gratis. The next step to aid the monks in this business was to invent as many mediators as possible: and, for this purpose of having friends at court, they exalted the mother of Jesus, and some of the apostles; but especially many of the saints, or voluntary devotees, who had undergone extreme austerities! Very few of the Greek or Latin fathers were reckoned in this catalogue. Hence arose altars, and offerings, and particular worship, to these nominal intercessors. Then the popes pretended that in their possession was lodged a wonderful treasure of merits, which, beginning with the merits of the Redeemer, had been immensely augmented by the merits of the saints and followers of Jesus; all of whom having some portion of merit more than their own case required, they had thrown in the superfluity, and the pope had a power to apply this as he pleased, and retail it out to such as wanted. If their adversaries derided this venal traffic, then they said it was the treasure of God's mercy, and that Jesus had intrusted them with the key of it, and a power to give or lend as the case required. Hence arose the doctrine of merits and supererogation: and hence followed the practice of many to live in the most careless, if not profligate and abandoned, manner, when they were told that their

(a) The pope, Leo X. was selling these indulgences for the purpose of building St. Peter's church, when Luther preached against them.

salvation could be worked out by others : hence also arose a reverence ^{John II. the} for the dead, and a degree of worship ; which was soon extended to the ^{23d abbor.} garments, or bones, or relics, of any sort ; and this opened a door to numberless frauds, and imposed on the laity, but was ever gainful to the monks.

It is impossible to revolve in our minds this corrupt system of doctrine and worship without shuddering at the extreme impudence of those who could invent and establish it, and at the gross ignorance and credulity of those who could receive and follow it. But this was the mystery of iniquity foretold by St. Paul, who, at the same time that we wonder at this system, furnishes us with the most powerful argument of the truth of our religion, when viewed in the purity of the gospel.

The monstrous impiety and blasphemy of Popery excite in us something far beyond indignation : we are alarmed at considering the future doom of these men, who taught devices, tricks, and other expedients beside a sober and virtuous life, to gain the blessedness of Heaven ; who made instruction no part of the public worship ; who thought they governed and fed the flock of Christ, if they could keep the people in subjection ; who confined the church of Christ to the body of the clergy ; and who taught that the grossest ignorance in their followers approached very near to perfect innocence.

In this period of my history the church had arrived at the meridian of its splendor and glory : or, to speak in more just language, the pope and clergy had attained the summit of their worldly power and grandeur, and boasted of having derived this pre-eminence from the blessed and holy Jesus, although *he* renounced all earthly greatness, and said, ‘ *His kingdom was not of this world.*’ The ignorance of the laity, the weak state of all governments, and the want of energy in the laws and of unanimity in the councils of princes, gave to churchmen an opportunity of mounting above the rulers of the earth. But in that spiritual kingdom, as they called it, or rather earthly dominion, in which the church held the temporal subjects of all princes, it is something curious to observe what resemblance the features of their rule and ordinances bear to the laws of the civil power. Thus the power of binding and loosing is analogous to a man’s being bound by a recognizance, to forfeit so much if he does not comply ; and loosing is a real respite of the penalty for a longer time. Excommunications (a) are a kind of spiritual outlawry : and, though at first

(a) Mosheim, vol. II. 64.

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they meant only an exclusion from the society of the faithful, they have since been followed with many disabilities and painful losses of civil privilege. An interdict from the pope, which was a total prohibition of all public worship, was borrowed from the Roman law, and prohibited the person from fire and water, and the enjoyment of all domestic comforts and society, and treated him as a vagabond and a Pagan. In the constitution of the church many things were appointed in full resemblance to the civil state. For instance, a benefice was copied from the gift, or donation, of land given to the old soldier : institution is authority given to exercise spiritual functions : but induction is analogous to livery and seizin, and is an investiture of the temporal rights and profits. First fruits, or annates, were an invention of the popes or bishops of Rome (for they are very early), and borrowed from the primer seizin of the feudal system ; they were one year's profit of the land or benefice. Mortuaries also were required as ecclesiastic heriots. The species of trial by wager of law in the Saxon courts was copied by the Roman clergy in their canonical compurgation. Cathedrals and bishops sees, palaces and courts, were constituted with much resemblance to imperial courts, and with the same officers, alike in name and in power, as that of chancellor, treasurer, &c. And thus the church of Rome, ever emulous of imperial state, adopted similar titles and offices, and laid the foundation of a rival empire (a).

(a) Blackstone's Comment. III. 46.

C H A P T E R V.

ROGER NORTON.

THE prior, soon after the funeral of John, dismissed three of the monks to the king, to obtain licence to elect a successor, and to make fine for the custody of the abbey and its temporalities. The licence of election was granted without delay or debate, and agreement made for 600 marks to the king, in lieu of all his rights, privileges, and perquisites, during a supposed vacancy: by this agreement the abbey was enabled to retain all presentations to their churches, and to hold all waifs, forfeitures, reliefs, and escheats, that might have happened. The day of election drawing near, and all the distant members who could attend this duty being arrived, the first step, as had been usual, was to make choice of the electors, called *Compromissors*, who had the sole power of electing, and were now nine in number, though they had been twelve at the time the last abbot was elected. These nine were appointed, not in a general chapter, but by the three or four priests who had authority to take confessions, and were, on that account, the most pre-eminent of the priesthood. Their voice was unanimous for ROGER DE NORTONE (or Norton). The election was declared the next day, and instantly the new-elected, taking with him the priors of Tinmouth and of Wymundham, and some of the brethren, hastened away to the king, with letters of election; and as speedily returned. The king then sent his own letters, with those of the convent, to the pope for confirmation. These letters were accompanied with letters also from the bishop of Norwich, then the pope's agent, &c. and with other letters from the bishop of Ely, and the abbots of Waltham and

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Roger the 2^d abbot. of St. Augustine in Canterbury, relative to this election, and probably to attest the good character of the elected. These were all sent by a messenger bearing a letter to the king's agent at Rome, called his proctor.

The pope, on receiving them, gave charge to the cardinal de Cornario, with two other cardinals, to examine the election; and, on their report, ordered bulls (a) to be prepared and sent to the prior and convent, confirming the election. These papal dispatches contained also many charges of duty and obedience to the elect, with letters to the bishops of London and of Ely, directing them to confer on the elect the grace of the holy benediction. Finally, the pope sent, as usual on these occasions, a letter to the king, intreating, on behalf of the abbot and the freemen of the land of St. Alban, that they may be allowed to pay obedience to the church of St. Alban; that is, that the king would not employ the civil power to diminish the rights and privileges of the holy church. These being received by the king and by the abbey, the benediction was conferred by the said bishop, the abbot of Waltham being present and assisting: this ceremony was performed before the great altar, on the Sunday before the Nativity, 1263.

The first thing done by Roger was to recover the abbey's estate at Childwic. It has been said how troublesome and vexatious Geoffrey de Childwic had been to the abbey, although their tenant and lessee: he had died lately, and given all his lands to his brother, including those within the manor of Childwic, which manor he had held of the abbey; the brother, sensible of a bad title to these, suffered the bailiff of the abbey, under the orders of Roger, to enter and recover the same: and, on petition from Roger to queen Eleanor, she caused the brother to pay all the costs and charges which Geoffrey had made the abbey to suffer, and to give a writing to quit claim, &c.

The priory of Wymundham gave fresh cause of trouble; for, the countess of Arundel, named Isabella D'Aubeny, claimed a right of appointing the prior at every vacancy; at least, that the abbey should not appoint any one whom she should not think to be *idoneus*. The convent would not agree to her having a power to reject, and said they were bound, by the charter of the founder, to defend, with the goods of the mother church, all injuries and contradictions made against that priory; and, the priory having saved some money, the

(a) So named from the Great Seal appendant, called *Bulla*.

abbot caused it to refund 200l. in order to defend this right : and the countess withdrew her claims and pretensions.

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In 1264, a great tumult and assault happened from the townsmen of St. Albans. They had been long accustomed to make woollen, though of the meanest kind ; but now they intended to full the cloth, and began to employ the mills for that purpose, and were content to grind their corn at home in small handmills. However advantageous this might prove to them, the abbot would not suffer his mills, four or five in number, to be applied to this use, and caused his bailiff to seize and distrain the handmills : great confusion arose, and violent outrage filled the town. The queen came down, and multitudes crowded the ways in expectation of meeting her and supplicating her on their behalf ; but the abbot took care to conduct her to the monastery by some private way. The people, thus disappointed, were more outrageous : however, by her mediation a compromise was effected, peace restored, and the mills converted to their former use. The town at this time was so barricaded at every avenue, on account of this insurrection within and the barons wars without, that it was called, from this fortified state and the positive refusal to any horseman to enter, Little London. During this tumult, the constable of Hertford castle, named Gregory de Stokes, came with three attendants armed, with intent to compel the seditious to observe peace and good order ; but the townsmen, pretending he meant to burn or to plunder the town, with extreme rashness and insolence seized them and cut off their heads, which they fixed on poles and set up at each entrance to the town. The king, hearing of this outrage, amerced the town in 100 marks, which they instantly paid.

In 1269, and during the life of king Henry, the church of Datchet became vacant by the death of Richard Green ; on which the abbot, who was the true patron, presented his clerk, William Blunden, to the bishop of Lincoln, then Richard de Gravesende, whom the bishop received, and made no objection ; but, before the institution, the bishop died. On which Sir Henry Pynkeney, knt. obtained from the Court of King's Bench a brief, under pretence that the advowson belonged to him, with a writ presenting William Eyton to that church. The king sent a letter of prohibition to the new bishop, commanding him to proceed no farther : Pynkeney urged his right, and moved a suit in the King's Bench, advising the abbot to forbear opposition, *because he was very familiar at court, and would be supported by all the body that surrounded the king.* At length Pynkeney came into court, attended by Alphonse, the governor of the young prince, and
many

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many other courtiers : the abbot pleaded long usage, unvaried right, and constant exercise of that right : the court adjourned and put off a farther hearing : then the abbot began to fail in his resolutions, and to foresee much trouble ; yet he hoped the adverse party would delay so long, that the living (after six months from the avoidance) would lapse to the new bishop, that he should thus get rid of his adversary, and that, if the bishop should in future times claim the advowson, he and his successors would find a milder or a more just enemy to contend with.

In the midst of these hopes he received a gracious letter from the queen, saying how acceptable it would be to her, if he would present Eyton to the living. Pynkeney then declined the suit, said he should be well content if the abbot would comply with the queen's request, and, in short, began to think his claim not so good as he did at first, and would renounce entirely, if the abbot would gratify the queen. To this the abbot consented, and, resuming the former presentation, he made another in favour of Eyton : and all the parties met at Chesham, together with the archdeacon of Bucks ; the abbot having sent Geoffrey Cambridge thither as sacrist. Eyton was instituted, and Blunden returned to the cloister, but not without some present to assuage his disappointment. Pynkeney, next year, renounced all right and claim, on viewing the deeds of his ancestors, and delivered the renunciation in a written form.

The next year the king sent down a letter, which was read in the consistory, in presence of the abbot, the whole body, and all the neighbouring gentry, requiring the abbey to elect a *coroner*, in the room of their seneschal, who had always exercised that office. Edward, in his third year, ordained that none under the rank of a knight should serve this office ; and, though this letter was sent two years before the death of Henry, it seems to favour of that innovation and reform which Edward afterwards put more fully into practice.

It was now discovered that two of the monks, one of whom was collector of all the rents and revenues, had committed many forgeries, by affixing the abbey-seal to several instruments, as bonds, contracts, and obligations ; whereby the abbey appeared to be borrowing money, and yet none came into the great chest. The usual custom was this ; the prior, sub-prior, præcentor, and this chaplain, (who was collector instead of the cellarer, now charged with want of sobriety,) had each a seal ; and whatever papers or deeds required to be made authentic, or, as we now speak, to be passed, were

were all brought into a secret parlour, and left there until the receiver could find time to affix the seal, which was to make them valid, instead of his writing his name. And this gave them opportunity to sign many that were not seen or known by the abbot. This discovery made it necessary to excommunicate the offenders, to declare the papers, from such a period, null and void, and to break the seal.

In 1275, it was ordained in full chapter, and for their future observation, that, when any prior or monk became incapable of duty through age or infirmity, he should be allowed a small annuity, and permitted to return to his friends, if he chose it, for the rest of his life. Another ordinance was made also, by the like authority, decreeing, that, when any monk died abroad, or out of the monastery, which happened sometimes at Redburn, the keeper of the infirmary should provide a cart and horses (*carettam et equos*) to convey the body to the gate of St. German's chapel, where the servants of the infirmary should attend to receive the same and carry it to the infirmary, with the cross borne, holy water sprinkled, censers burning, and tapers lighted; the whole procession chaunting certain psalms: and that, in the infirmary, the body should undergo all the necessary washings, embowelling, salting, sewing up, and decent apparel, previous to its being committed to the dust. And thus a costly burial after death was to console the poor monk for a life of toil and watchfulness, and a course of painful duty.

The church of Chinner became vacant by the death of William Penne, and one Hugo, a goldsmith of London, presented, in prejudice of the cell at Wallingford; the prior of which asserted his right, and that he had before presented to it one Richard Sotwell, and he now cautioned the bishop of Lincoln against institution. The cause was delayed, but heightened into a law-suit; and the bishop, taking advantage of a lapse, collated to the church one Coleman, as if in full right: but, at the assize, the right of patronage was adjudged to the prior, and the king wrote to the bishop, injoining him, that, notwithstanding the proclamation of Hugo, he would proceed to institute a proper person. The church of Thirfield (or Turville, as now called) in Bucks had long been in the possession of the abbey: and, about this time, the abbot having neglected to send a proctor to the bishop's synod at Aylesbury, the officers of the bishop's court (*Ordinariis*) took possession of Thirfield by direction, and declared it to be sequestered. The abbot requested the vicar of Wycomb, who was dean of the synod, to desire of the sequestrators to withdraw, and he

Roger the would make satisfaction for his error. The dean contemned the request
 24th abbot. and would not comply. The abbot then wrote to the vicars of Wynflow and of Horwood that they should declare the dean excommunicated for his disobedience. The vicars obeyed, and thereupon John de Luca, the official of Buckingham, issued a mandate to the vicars of Hugen-don and Medmeham, that they should publicly pronounce, in the said church of Wycomb, that the above excommunication was null and void, and declare that the vicars of Wynflow and of Horwood had no jurisdiction, either ordinary or delegate, against the dean; and he commenced a suit against them for an unjust excommunication, and for issuing citations contrary to the privileges of St. Alban's monastery. The vicars appealed to the court of arches, or the arch-bishop's court, in which the sentence of the official was annulled and the sequestration taken off; but not until the vicars had obtained a prohibition from the king.

These sequestrations were much in practice, and bear a very near resemblance to distress at common-law. For, in 1281, Peckham, the archbishop, summoned to a council, assembled at Lambeth, all the exempt and non-exempt of his province; and, on the refusal of some, he ordered his suffragan bishops to take possession of certain churches, and sequester the goods and chattels to their own use; and charging those churches, if they could not prove a rightful exemption, to appeal. On which the abbots of St. Peter Westminster, of St. Alban, of St. Edmund, and of Waltham, protested unto the hands of a notary-public their exemption, and appealed to the official court of Canterbury, where the judge, Peter de Saint Maire, ordained them to 'pay the accustomed composition, that the sequestration, or distresses, should be taken off, and the appeals dismissed: that they should reserve their defence *intégrè*, and submit unanimously; and so comport themselves for the future, that these transactions might not derogate from the privileges of the abbeys, or from the dignity of the archbishop, whenever he should call a like assembly.' A sentence that leaves open the claims and pretensions of all the parties.

A great contest and suit at law arose in civil matters also between the abbot and one William Merun of Sandridge; the latter having alleged, that the abbot, by his servants of the manor, had seized his horses and cows, and imprisoned his body, for not performing the services due and incumbent on him. The abbot answered that William was a *villanus*, and held his land subject to such services, which had not been performed, and that the abbot had pursued the remedy directed by the law. Merun valued his 3 oxen and 4 horses

at 11 marks. This suit had begun in the 54th year of Henry III. and the two litigants had been vexing each other ever since; Merun still pleading that he was a free man, and held his land free from any service: but now at the assize and by the sentence of John de Ryegate, the justiciary, he was proved to hold only in villanage: and thereon the abbot seized his land, and infeofed another tenant therein.

In 1277, it was ordained in a general chapter of the Benedictines, that the psalm, which is called *Fides Athanasii, Quicumque vult*, should not in future be recited at the prime, or first service of the day, except on Sundays: it used to be repeated in all the festivals, and made twelve lessons in a week. Many other omissions were also directed, in order to shorten the service. And Edward I. having, in the next Parliament, procured an act, or statute, forbidding the religious to hold or appropriate to themselves any lands, rents, or possessions, my author (a) says, he did this *in ultionem tantæ pigritiæ*. This was the famous STATUTE OF MORTMAIN, and the first ever made on that subject. It enjoins that the religious shall not receive *Fees* by purchase, by appropriation, by gift, or by any services, which, having been provided for the defence of the realm, have been unjustly omitted and withdrawn. It charges the chief lord to enter, and, by default of one year, the king shall enter, and infeof others in certain services for the defence of the realm: reserving to the chief lord his escheats, wards, and other accustomed dues. The pope's council at Lyons, held in 1245, had decreed that the religious should pay tenths of the just value of their goods and possessions, temporal and spiritual; and 200 marks of silver was imposed on this abbey, as a yearly payment, to relieve the remaining Christians in Palestine against the Saracens. Roger had been present (b) and consented; but the times of payment were not observed, and, for this default, the present pope inhibited the worship to go on; and the whole service ceased, until, by the intercession of John Darlington, a frier-preacher, they obtained an absolution; that is, probably, paid their money.

The falsifying the abbey-seal had caused great frauds, and, about the time of the abbot's death, there were discovered at London two deeds under these seals, declaring that a Jew had lent the abbey 1000 marks, and that the monks had pawned, for sums of money, certain of their valuable trinkets, &c. as golden crowns, and precious stones, two cups of gold of 24 pounds weight, beside 300

(a) Walsingham, MS.

(b) He had attended as one of the proctors for his predecessor, John of Hertford. See p. 146.

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24th abbot. silver spoons. The like fraud was found to have been committed on the abbey at Reading; where the Jew, being taken and prosecuted, suffered death as a cheat and impostor, confessing the fraud. And it was supposed that some Jew had corrupted the keepers of the seals here, and, by their connivance, had purloined the plate and jewels.

In 1278, the abbot visited Tynmouth, and abode six weeks at Durham, and, having received great civilities from the bishop, he invited him, in return, to Tynmouth; but here the prior objected, who, having some years since aimed at independency and shewn himself very contumacious, was preparing to revive his ancient enmities: however, at length, he complied, and admitted the two great men, and unanimity prevailed. After an entertainment of some days the bishop returned well pleased, and the abbot hastened back to his abbey, where he was received with great joy, and much applauded for his successful visit at Tynmouth, in reclaiming a disobedient brother.

In the next year, the abbot was summoned by the king's justices itinerant to Maidstone, to shew by what warrant, or right, he claimed view of Frankpledge over the tenants of the manor of Eastwell, and assize of bread and ale, and amerced them in his manor-court at Eastwell; and over such as used to follow the court of our lord the king. One William Tylingham prosecuted for the king, and said that king Richard was seized of these farms and liberties, as belonging to his crown; that John and Henry had holden the same in like manner; and that the abbot holds them by subtraction, and damns the king in 100l. a year. The abbot defended, by his attorney, and said, that Nigel D'Aubeney (*de Albineo*) held the said manor with all its liberties, &c. and gave the same to God and the church; and that he, the abbot, held, as Nigel had given, for the redemption of his and his parents souls; and produced the charter-deed. The prosecutor replied, that, whatever confirmation Richard might give, his predecessors had possessed this manor; and insisted that the abbot should put himself on his country. The jury found 'that none of the kings had 'been seized of this manor prior to Richard, that the abbot and his 'predecessors had from length of time (from which time there exists no 'memory or record) used the said liberty, or view of frankpledge, with 'assize of bread and ale, and had amerced the tenants, and had made 'no subtraction from the hundred court of Estre; but that the bailiff, 'and two men of the manor, did every year make suit at the hundred 'court on the two law-days; so that the king's court suffered no
' sub-

' subtraction. And farther, it is adjudged that the abbot depart *sine die*, and that the king is intitled to nothing for his brief (a).'

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The king, by his justices, caused many inquisitions to be made concerning the privileges of his crown, and actually seized into his hands many of the liberties belonging to the religious. Our abbot was summoned to answer, by what warrant he claimed to have and possess divers liberties in divers manors and places, as well in what belonged to the principal monastery as to the cells; but, on producing the records and instruments, the justices were satisfied, and allowed all their claims. This was practised on the cell at Hertford, at which place the abbot was brought before John de Ryegate and others, on the morrow of All Souls, in 6 of Edward I. to answer to the claims of some others on the lands held by this priory; but the abbot claimed (under the grants of Henry II. Richard, and John) view of frankpledge, chattels of felons and fugitives, and free warren, in all the lands belonging to the priory; and, on view of those grants, the abbot's rights were approved.

The Edwards ruled all their subjects with a much stronger hand than Henry had used. For, the abject submission of John, and the concessions he had made to the pope and the church, had prevailed through Henry's reign, to the ruin and debasement of the crown, the impoverishing of the people, and the great exaltation of the clergy. But Edward I. had courage to institute better order, and to work a reform: with this view, he formed a second council, in Parliament, of the lesser barons, knights, and burgeses; by which the lower ranks of subjects were raised to some importance, and this second council was a kind of counterprize to the power of the barons, who composed the first. And now, having united these two branches in legislation, he used them in restraining the increasing wealth of the clergy, who, he perceived, were always acquiring but never alienated. In the seventh year he procured the Mortmain-Act, and the year before he had issued *quo warranto's* to several bodies of the lesser clergy to shew their titles. Under these restraints, the clergy were less enterprizing in the affairs of state, and Edward confined them to the peaceful discharge of their duty.

Our abbot procured many advantages in point of estate and landed property. He had obtained from Henry III. a grant of a market for Codicote, to be held on the sixth day of every week (or on Saturday) throughout the year, with all the privileges and free customs belonging

(a) Capiat nil propter breve suum.

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to markets ; and also a grant for a yearly fair for four days. He obtained also of divers persons, who had leased small estates to the abbey, for the maintenance of an aged parent or servant, that they should, at the death of such persons, quit claim and renounce their right : of this sort of purchase, called *perquisitio*, there were more than forty, although the premises were often no more than an acre of land, or a rood, or, perhaps, a wretched cottage falling to the ground. And here we may discern the origin of that mode of conveyance, by lease and release, which prevailed for many years, until the last century, and which, though practised by the clergy as an evasion of the statute, yet came into universal use with the laity and others. Norton also extinguished many claims and latent rights, by giving an equivalent in money : as, for instance, he procured from John Lewis of Luton, a written grant, which John had obtained with much solicitation, for leave of common pasture in the abbot's pool at Luton near the mill : in all the manors he bought out the rights of the little tenants : and, at Watford, he procured or abolished the right of taking toll there, practised by the millers for grinding : and of these small redemptions the number was above twenty. He bestowed much cost in adorning the church and the monastery ; which last was now deemed very splendid and handsome, (*speciosissima*,) for, he had furnished all the chambers (*cameras*) with chimneys and closets. He also rebuilt the infirmary, and gave 100 marks to the work ; this was executed by the diligence of the prior, John Maryns, who, unknown to the abbot, took the timber out of the abbot's wood, and completed the work in two years. He gave to the choir seventeen copes of crimson, adorned on the shoulders with images, or figures, made of gold fringe, and in them was worked the name of the donor, for the perpetual record of his fame. He gave four altar-cloths, and one for the Virgin's altar, where mass was said every day and sung *ad notam*, that is, the service set to music. He gave also a pair of decretals ; and the sums, or comments, of Raymund, Manfred, and Bernard, on the decretals : and, among many other choice books, he bestowed one in which was contained Seneca and his discourses. He caused a very large and deep-sounding (*sonorossissima*) bell, to be made and hung up, to be struck every night at the time of Curfew ; and two other bells in honour of St. Alban and St. Catharine : and he broke four old bells to furnish the metal, &c. for these three. He caused one censer to be made, of silver gilt, and very handsome, weighing 4lb. 11oz. and of price 11 marks, which is 2s. 6d. per oz.

In his last illness he caused all the plate to be brought before him, and made donations of the same to his secular friends, and gave money also to his relations. He gave likewise some corrodies, putting the chapter-seal to the grants with his own hands. He was suspected of conniving secretly at the loss and alienation of Stanmere and of Horwode, both of which were claimed under ancient grants or leases from the abbey, in which, it was pretended, the abbey had not observed the covenants, and thereby the right was forfeited: this might be; yet it was almost impossible to vindicate ancient rights, at a time when the crown and its judges called every thing, belonging to the clergy, in question. But, as he had done numberless things well, he was easily excused for some few that appeared ill; and he departed with the love and esteem of all, who gave great tokens of real sorrow and concern: at his death the church was not 100 marks in debt. After thirty years rule and strenuous exertions, he died in 1290, and was buried before the great altar; the bishop of Ely performing the funeral service, and the prior of Waltham with a great number of religious and seculars attending.

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cf. 1290
rule 230

Having already mentioned the high hand with which Edward swayed the sceptre, and hinted at some of the means he took to restrain the power and consequence of the clergy, I will here add a few observations, that grow out of that subject or tend to illustrate it. The statute of Mortmain not only forbade the clergy to make purchases, but also to receive even by gift and donation. And Edward discovered, so early as the third year of his reign (1275) in what manner he meant to govern the clergy of his kingdom: for, in this year, he procured the statute of Westminster the first, which considerably lessened the privileges of clerkship. On this statute *Sir Edward Coke* observes, (3 Edward I. cap. 2.) that, before this act, if any clerk had been arrested, for the death of a man or any other felony, and the ordinary did demand him in the presence of the secular judge, he was to be delivered, without any inquisition to be made of the crime. But, after this statute, when any clerk was indicted of any felony, and refused to answer to the felony on the score of his clerkship, and was demanded by his ordinary; in this case, before he was delivered to the ordinary, an inquisition was to be taken, whether he was guilty of the fact or not, and, if he were found guilty, his goods and chattels were forfeited, and his lands seized into the hands of the king. But then, as *Fleta* reports, if the clerk was delivered afterward to the ordinary,

and

Roger the 24th abbot and stood the test of the spiritual court, and cleared himself by the customary forms of purgation, the king, on certificate from the ordinary, was bound to restore him his goods, chattels, and lands. Thus, by the interpretation of the clergy, the last judgement of the offence was left with the diocesan. This privilege continued with the spiritual courts until the reign of Elizabeth, when it was enacted (18 Eliz.) that no man, allowed his clergy, should be delivered to his ordinary (a).

It was not merely with a view to reduce the exorbitant power of the church, or to gratify the king's pique and envy, that parliament passed the Mortmain-act; there were other reasons, of a more public nature, which swayed with both king and Parliament: for, when estates were given to the church, many of the services incident to the fee were sunk: the lords lost their wards, marriages, and reliefs; and the public lost the military aid which was due for those fees. So that the number of fees, though by the appointment of the Conqueror they amounted to 60,000, was, by the negligence or refusal of the clergy, diminished to one third of that number.

The king also, in the parliament holden at Westminster in 1285, obtained another statute that affected the clergy, called the statute of *circumspecte agatis*; which was intended to distinguish the two jurisdictions, and to ascertain the limits of the spiritual and temporal courts; and was meant as a sort of a barrier between the church and the state. It set forth that causes *merely spiritual*, and therein specified, did come within the cognizance of the court Christian, and that no prohibition should issue from the civil courts in such causes; for that they have no mixture of the temporalities, and because they are corrections *pro salute animæ*. And this prudent salutary law endures to this day.

The king continued to act with much more rigour, and, from his former success, proceeded to greater severity. For, in the parliament, holden at St. Edmundsbury in 1296, the laity granted the king a large supply, but the clergy refused to contribute any thing, alleging, that their late payment of half a year's profit ought to excuse them. The king rejected this excuse, and ordered all the barns of the clergy to be locked up. On which the archbishop Winchelsey directed the bull of pope Boniface to be read in all the churches; by virtue of which the clergy were forbidden, under excommunication, to pay any taxes to the king without the pope's consent; and all collectors of

such a tax were put under the like censure. The archbishop convened the bishops and clergy to a synod at St. Paul's; and the king sent them a charge not to make any constitutions prejudicial to his prerogative or the public repose, or to disturb any person under his protection and government. The synod instantly entered on the matter of subsidy, and the majority refused to comply. On this the king's highness ordered his officers to seize the horses of the clergy and religious; he also forbade the lawyers to plead for them, and denied them the assistance both of the bench and of the bar; in fine, he commanded them to be outlawed, and put out of the protection of the government. In this situation did they continue, until four prelates proposed a temper and accommodation: but the archbishop refused any qualifying expedient; on which the king seized on all his estates, and he was reduced to extreme necessity; yet still he protested against all compliance. The four prelates proposed, that they should give one-fourth part of their goods, and deposit the money in the safe custody of some sanctuary, to be hereafter applied and expended, in the public service of church and state. The king was now engaged in a war with France, and, hearing that the money was collected and deposited, he made a seizure of the whole, in contempt of the sanctuary; after which he took off the outlawry, and restored their horses, &c.

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The pope was not a whit behind hand in this dexterous way of getting money; for, the next year he also practised on the Franciscans. These holy brethren sent a deputation of three brothers to the pope, to request that he would be pleased to empower them to purchase lands, and live like other orders, and renounce the scandal of begging; and they were to offer him 40,000 ducats for a bull to this effect. The pope inquired if they had the money ready? yes, they answered, it was at Rome in the hands of a certain banker, whom they named: he then desired three days to consider the petition, at the end of which time they were directed to return: he, in the interval, sent and demanded the money of the banker; and, in order to quiet his conscience, he accompanied this demand with an absolution for breach of trust. When the three days were expired, the holy friars waited on the pope, elated with hope. But he said, 'he could not suffer them 'to renounce the oath of poverty, nor was it advisable to dispense 'with the rule of St. Francis: and, as to the money, it must remain for the use of the Roman see (a).'

(a) Matt. West. ad. an. 1299.

JOHN OF BERKHAMPSTEAD.

John III. the
25th abbot.

The death of Norton being known, the king's escheator, named Malcolm, hastened down, and, demanding all the keys, made a very strict search into the chests and coffers of the late abbot. He made an inventory of all the effects which he thought had been the property of the abbot; visited all the farms and granges in hand; and proceeded to sell the crops then growing, the horses, cattle, and implements: he took no money, but agreed for price: the officers of the house remonstrated on this new proceeding; and, the king being apprized hereof, he came down, now in the 18th year of his reign. He made strict enquiry into the state and rule of the house, and, after some days, restored all the temporalities, and reinstated the monks in their possessions. The prior, John de Maryns, had procured the election to be made a few days before the king's arrival; and therefore the new-elected was now presented, and many expressions, full of approbation, passed. Four monks were dispatched to Rome, to procure confirmation; where they were made to undergo a very strict examination, relative to the form of the election. The prior, noting the activity of the escheator, went from one priory to the other, to give them warning of his visits, and to put them on their guard.

During the vacancy, the vicarage of Hoston had become void: and the prior and convent presented, and the archbishop approved and gave institution, without any interruption from the king, or any claims of prerogative being urged.

The new-elected abbot thought it necessary to go to Rome in person, although his four brethren had appeared there with all the usual credentials for gaining confirmation. This *John of Berkhamstead*, therefore, was the *first*, who, as Willis notes, went to Rome on this business *in person*. When he arrived at *Civita Vecchia*, called, in the language of Rome, *Urbs Antiqua*, he was met by two cardinals, and suffered to approach no nearer; but he was here interrogated, in the strictest manner, as to the forms of the election and his own qualifications; whether he lay under any canonical impediment; when and where the election was holden, to which it was answered on the 5th Id. Dec. Many questions were put to the abbot, of the most trivial kind; as if the court of Rome feared some collusion in the appointment,

ment, and would not be satisfied with the usual attestations. The abbot had gone to Rome, by the advice of his chapter, in order to obviate that probable severity which they were likely to experience from the king, and to make a friend at Rome: and, on the other hand, the cardinals made the most minute inquiry into the life and morals of the elect, as if to obviate any future objection which the king might make. The charge and expences of this journey exceeded 1300 marks, of which about 800 went in liberalities to the cardinals and to the holy chest.

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25th abbot.

The abbot, on his return, stopped at the priory at Hertford for some days, in order to attend the king, then returning from Northampton. On his Majesty's arrival, the abbot presented to him the instrument of confirmation, received at Rome; but, the king observing that it had its seal, or bull, of lead, he said it was null and void, and perhaps a counterfeit. This was an unexpected obstacle; but the abbot dispatched a messenger to the *camerarius*, or keeper of the records, then at Redburn, to produce other and more ancient bulls; these being of lead also, the king withdrew his objection, admitted the abbot to his oath of allegiance, and directed his escheator to restore the temporalities. On St. Alban's day, the abbot returned, and was received with great solemnity: the abbot of Waltham attended, a great mass was performed, a vast multitude was present, and the prior had provided with uncommon splendor for the joy of the day.

The abbot had taken up the 1300 marks, expended when abroad, of the foreign merchants, and given bills for the same; and now the time was approaching for payment, but no money could our abbot find: the treasury was empty, and the house impoverished. On this he repaired to the king, and besought him to direct his escheator to purchase the crops on the ground, and take them at the price he had set a few months before: the king complied, and the escheator sold the corn on the ground, and raised for the abbot 913 marks, 10s. 5d. This was in July, 1291.

It was now the year 1293 (21 of Edward), when the king directed the sheriff of Northumberland to order the abbot of St. Alban's to yield up to his majesty the advowson of the priory of Tinnmouth, unjustly withheld (a) from him; and, in case of refusal, 'that the abbot do appear before our justices itinerant, at the next assize, and have you there this brief.' Dated, Robertsbury, November 30. The abbot presented himself before the king, but in great dismay and

(a) Deforcatus.

John III. the trouble, and represented the impropriety and utter impossibility of
 25th abt. or. gratifying his Majesty : the king at length forbore his suit, and gave
 the abbot a charter of confirmation ; so that his view in this proceeding seems to have been the same as when he issued his *quo warrantos*, in the beginning of his reign.

But, a year or two after, a report came to the ear of the abbot, that the prior, Adam de Telbing, and the convent of Tinmouth, were ready to go into rebellion and to refuse all obedience to the abbey : the abbot hastened thither, and, at Newcastle, he applied to the mayor for an armed force and a company of followers to attend him, to suppress the rebellion : the mayor had heard nothing of this insurrection ; but referred the abbot to one Henry Scott, a citizen of some note and a familiar friend of the prior ; assuring the abbot of his good offices to compromise all differences. The abbot, by proper address and application, gained over Scott to accompany him ; and away they marched, with a great posse, in the night. Next morning Scott appears at the gate, and demands entrance ; which being obtained, the abbot and company advance, and, occupying the gate, seize the keys and post a guard : Scott then conducts the abbot and followers to the prior's chamber, where the prior is found just returned from chapel, and putting off his surplice ; on hearing Scott's voice, he opens the door ; whereupon the abbot enters with his guard, and instantly makes the prior prisoner. He was kept in custody some days, and then sent, under a strong guard, on shipboard, conveyed to some foreign monastery, and never heard of more. A new prior was appointed, and this rebellion crushed ; and Scott was recompensed with many privileges and beneficial gratuities, to the loss and detriment of the priory. But it was learnt that the former prior, and John Thorblock, and some others, had put the king on that step of claiming the advowson ; hoping and wishing to be thereby nearer the king's presence, who was then warring against Scotland.

It was now the ninth year of John's advancement, when he purposed to visit Wymundham ; but a certain lawyer of the town, named Tateshall, hearing of the abbot's coming, entered the priory and barred the gate, refusing the abbot to come in or the prior to go out. The party within was too weak to resist and expel this violent usurper ; and the party without too small and unprovided to support their claim of right, and force admission : so that the abbot was obliged to retreat, and make his abode at some other house. Here he prepared a form of excommunication against these malefactors, and
 ordained

ordained that the sentence should be read four times in every year, ^{John III. the} the bells tolling and the lights all flaming: after some time and ^{25th abbot,} much altercation between these contending chiefs, the discord was ended, and a compromise effected, between the conspiracy within and the excommunication without.

In 1299, the church of Datchet became void, by the death of Eyton, and the abbot presented a certain clerk; but, by his neglect and delay, (the bishop of Lincoln dying,) he could not receive institution. On this, one Sir Hugh D'Espencer sent his clerk with a presentation, to the archbishop, claiming the church as under his own patronage. This prelate ordered the official of Bucks to make inquiry if the church was vacant, and how; and he returned, 'By death, and 'that D'Espencer was the true patron, and that Richard de Stand was 'by him presented.' Richard himself accompanied this return to the archbishop, and obtained institution. This transaction was unknown to the abbot, until he was told that Stand had got possession. When he demanded of D'Espencer by what peculiar instinct he would presume to vindicate his claim of patronage, to the prejudice and injury (*lesionem*) of him and his church, D'Espencer attempted to give reasons in justification; but, on the abbot's producing the proofs on his part, D'Espencer believed his right now was not quite so good as he had thought it; and offered to drop his pretensions, provided his clerk was suffered to remain. Nothing more is said; and probably the clerk did not quit.

By a decree of pope Boniface VIII. anno 1290, the church and all its members were forbidden to pay any portion, or tax, of their goods to the king, or any noble or soldier, without the consent of the Holy See. The king, now meditating a war with France, was little attentive to this injunction; and exacted money of the bishops and abbots, locking up their barns and horses, as I have already stated. This was practised on the possessions of our abbot; but he gained a release, on paying down the sum required.

An agreement had been made, in the time of the late abbot Roger, betwixt him and John, the son of John ———, concerning the chase of Horewood. But this John had, of late years, done much mischief by cutting the timber, despoiling the underwood, and thereby starving the deer. The abbot shewed the composition above-mentioned: John answered *it was null and void, having only the abbot's seal*. This was answered by a prosecution, and the justices gave sentence against John, saying 'that both parties were equally bound, 'that the agreement was good and valid against him as well as for
' him,

John III. the 25th abbot. ‘ him, and it was necessary he should comply in every article that tended to save the timber and preserve the deer,’ &c.

The former exactions of the king were not the only cause that afflicted the abbot: for, at this time, came from the court one Kirby, styled a familiar of the king; and this man, by threats and other arts of extortion, compelled the abbot to pay 1000 marks to Geoffrey de Verano, an executor of the Holy See, for the aid of the poor Christians in the Holy Land under the oppression of the Ottomans; and this, he said, should be considered as tenths paid in advance. Though this was a demand made by the king, under pretence of being for the pope and the Holy Land, yet it was in reality for himself. It was answered by our abbot, that he and his church had paid as much as this sum to the king, for this very use: the king said, he had used all that money in his expedition into Arragon: the abbot, thereupon, begged a truce on the occasion; adding that, though the king had given him a patent of indemnification for himself and his heirs, as he had done to many other monasteries, yet he could not comply with this new demand, without suffering a very great grievance. On this, the king promised a recompence, and directed the abbot to pay the money. At length the cellarer, having procured 1430 marks, gave the king 1000, and the recompence in the letters patent was this, ‘that, whereas the abbey had suffered great expences and labours, and the abbot had brought the same to a conclusion, the abbey should, at every vacancy of the abbacy by death, continue to enjoy as well the barony as all other their possessions, with a power of disposing of the same; which barony and possessions the king had been used to hold, to the innumerable losses and grievances of the said house.’ The king gives at the same time an acquittance, or release, to the abbot and his church, of all debts, however due to him or his predecessors in time past. In this patent of recompence he engages that the cells and their possessions shall be safe and inviolate, and that his escheator shall stay no longer than one day within the gates of the abbey or cell. This is dated in the 31st of his reign, namely, 1301.

The king gave them also a charter, confirming all the former grants made by his royal predecessors; one of which was free warren in all their lands, and even *Warrena Columbarum*; and another, to pay no toll in buying any thing for the monastery: he also confirmed another ancient grant, that the men of the abbot should not go out of the liberty, on any summons or on any occasion, to appear before any other justiciary; so that the seneschal had a power of oyer and terminer, general goal-delivery, of assize, &c.

The king, on his expedition into Scotland, had required the military aid, which was the service incumbent on the abbot as a baron, and consisted in the whole of six men only. And now Oxey and Crokesley found one man: Batchworth, Britewell, and Harpfield, provided another: Langley, Westwic, Rickmersworth, Burston, Garston, and Syret, raised one man: John de Gorham and Lau. de Broke were bound to find one man, for the fee they held in Westwic and Shephall; and it fell to the turn of Gorham to provide him: Chilwic, Myrdon, Bradelkye, Sisseverne, and Norton, found one man; and now the turn fell on Sisseverne: Sopwell lands, Titeburst, Wynung, Redburn, Hexton, and Blackhide, found the sixth; and it was now Sopwell's turn. Although these estates far exceeded six knight's fees, yet this aid had been appointed at first, and was still permitted to be, in foot-soldiers, armed and provided, paid and maintained, during the king's pleasure.

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A precept came from the king, charging the abbot to direct his cellarer, John de Stevenache, and his bailiff, John Greenstude, to examine and compare all the weights, in the markets here and at Watford, by the standard which had been long kept in the monastery; and to do this in the presence of a jury of twelve men.

Robert de Winchelsey (the archbishop) was making his abode for some time at Hawes, and requested to visit the abbot, now labouring under old age and infirmity, and be entertained in this abbey: but the abbot and chapter begged leave to decline that honour; and in a manner that was considered as a gross refusal. However, the archbishop came, and the abbot's *marescallus*, or grand equerry, gave him reception and entertainment in the town; but, the bells not ringing at St. Stephen's, he grew angry, and threatened to inhibit the church service, or put an interdict on the church: and, indeed, some trouble was feared; but, the abbot dying, his successor found means to appease the archbishop.

This abbot, after ruling the house ten years and a half, died, on the 15th of November, 1301. Having fallen under a sentence of excommunication, he lost the manor of Childwic, which his predecessor had recovered and dedicated to his anniversary. He had incurred the hatred of the priors; for, he had removed and changed them all, except the new prior of Wymundham,—and he was still very strenuously defended by Tatehall, who continued claiming the patronage and advowson. Although our abbot had possessed an ample revenue, he still added to it by great sales of timber and wood, to the prejudice of his successor; and yet he burthened his house with pensions and

many

John III. the 25th abbot. many liberal benefactions. He was esteemed to possess many virtues, beside being social and good tempered: he was buried, on the 19th of November, before the great altar, the abbots of Westminster and of Wobourn attending the solemnity.

The sub-efcheator came to the abbey, *ad capiendam seizinam*, or to take possession for the king; but the prior read to him the king's grant, in the presence of two of the king's justiciaries, Henry Sprigial and John Aygnell, and of others. The two justiciaries had been requested to come down, to speak on the validity of the royal grant; and the sub-efcheator allowed the king's concession, and withdrew.

When we observe the unjust and base methods, practised by the sovereign, to get money, we cannot but think it a most noble struggle in favor of popular right and common justice, when, in the last century, the true patriots insisted, that no king had a right (although an usage) to levy money without consent of Parliament. And this is one of the most valuable ingredients in English liberty: it is a right of the people, built on natural justice; to be exercised in a certain orderly and regular manner; and to be applied for the good of the whole, not for the caprice or wanton humour of a few.

JOHN MARYNS.

John IV. the 26th abbot. The funeral being performed, three monks were dismissed to the king, then at Lilleston, in Scotland, to beg licence to elect. The king readily consented; and, the day being fixed, the chapter chose, and with great unanimity, *John Maryns*, who, for fourteen years, had served the duty of prior. No election could pass with more universal joy, except by the prior of Redburn, who, during the whole day, kept the chapter assembled, and would read his exceptions and objections. The elected went and presented himself to the king, and was graciously received; and, on the first day of Lent, set forth, with four brethren of the monks, towards Rome. In this journey he passed the mountains of Chat and of Seneise, as they were then called; and was forced to go to Anagnia, where the pope was then holding his court. When at length he obtained an audience, a long examination ensued, as before, into the forms of the election and the merits of the elected. He was then confirmed, and next day received

the holy benediction, and returned on the Sunday after the feast of John IV. the St. Bartholomew, 1302. The charges and fees at Rome amounted to ^{26th abbot.} 3000 florins (a).

In the mean time, the body at home petitioned the queen that she would be pleased to remit a fee that used to be paid to her, called *the Queen's Gold*. But her treasurer answered, 'that this was a fine for the king's grant of holding the abbey on a vacancy, when he gave a compensation for the 1000 marks;' and it must be paid for this new reason *now*, as *formerly* for some old reason.

The king, in his charter of compensation, had reserved to himself a power to collate, as the abbot had done, to the churches which should be void during the vacancy of the abbacy: and, the rectory of Watlington becoming void in that time, the king's chancellor presented to it, because, he said, the taxation (b) of it was under ten marks: although, at the same time, P. Muntfichet, a great lord, claimed the right of patronage. Here is an instance of that privilege which the chancellors of England have ever enjoyed; and we may here see how it was derived to them from the first rights that had been exercised by the crown: and the privilege remains the same to this day, with the change only of the measure, or boundary, which extends now to *twenty pounds*.

But we may trace also other usages and present rights. It had long been a custom for the new abbot, at every election, to bestow a certain pension on some clerk of the king's appointment, especially of his chaplains; and the abbot hoped the king would forbear that claim, on taking one of the abbey's churches and giving it as above: but the king wrote to the abbot, commanding him to appoint the pension, and pay it annually to his clerk therein named; and insisted on the abbey-seal being put to the grant without delay. The abbot complied, and granted ten marks a year, to be continued so long as the clerk should live *in habitu seculari*, (for, he was not yet ordained,) and to be paid at St. Alban's, every year, 'until we can provide him with a competent church.' Dated *in pleno capitulo*, 19 Sept. an. 30^o Regni. (1307).

Peace was now made with Robert de Tateshall, the son, who no longer asserted those claims, which had been set up and maintained by the father, to the patronage and advowson of Wymundham. And, in the present compromise, it is stated that, the father having married a woman descended from the D'Aubignys who had founded the priory 200 years before, he had asserted the same to be part of

(a) Which, at 4s. 6d. a florin, is 815l.

(b) By this taxation was meant the first fruits, or first year's profit.

John IV. the
26th abbot.

her inheritance; and, on that foundation, he had got possession, and struggled hard to keep it; until death took him away, when the son renounced these pretensions.

When Edward I. made his first incursions into Scotland, the abbot of this church had furnished the established feudal aid of six soldiers; but, on his later incursions, towards the close of his reign, the abbot contributed, in lieu of this military aid, the sum of six score pounds at one time, and six score marks at another. And now Edward II. just come to the crown, and preparing war with Scotland, demanded of Maryns to be furnished with two carts, and proper horses and all appurtenances: the abbot pleaded his poverty and inability to comply: the king came down to the abbey, but refused either to converse with the abbot or to see him; on which Maryns, by the mediation of Peers (Gaveston, gave the king 100 marks of silver, and they parted in seeming friendship. Soon after, Edward cut down a wood at Langley, called Westwode, in order to enlarge the royal mansion, &c. on which the abbot exclaimed at the invasion of his property, and asserted the wood to belong to the abbey: but the king ordered his foresters to enter, and, by ousting the abbot's servants, keep possession of the same. This palace, or royal mansion, had been begun by Henry III. and was the favorite residence of the sovereigns, for many successive reigns: and at this place Edward II. did afterwards found a small endowment of frier-preachers, and deposited in their church the body of his favorite Gaveston, when the barons, in 1312, without trial or ceremony, cut off his head. The church of this priory is now the parish church, and exhibits an ancient rude monument, said to be that in memory of Gaveston; (though the arms, sculptured on the stone work, denote quite another family;) and another to the memory of Edmund of Langley, son of Edward III. and of his wife Isabella of Castile.

Our abbot turned his thoughts to new regulations in the house, and framed many injunctions, or rules, for its better government; yet they went no farther than to a stricter observance of silence, to the more orderly wearing of the cowl, and to such kind of matters, in short, as denoted the power of the ruler and the subjection of the ruled; but which had no subserviency to real religion, or tendency to promote the moral duties.

Thus, after six years and three quarters, our abbot finding himself grow feeble, and his bodily strength to fail, he called the chief officers to his chamber, and told them the state of the abbey; that it lay under obligations of debt in the sum of 1300l. to sundry creditors, and to the king in 1000 marks for the last vacancy; and that he had only *seventeen* marks in his treasury, sent lately by the prior of Tynmouth: he advised that they would, at his decease, present to the king the great cup of silver and a ring; that they would not choose into his

place any man that was likely to be proud and pompous, but one who would be plain and honest: he desired, to meet his brethren once more in chapter; and, being conveyed thither in the arms of two monks, he intreated that his successor, whoever he might be, would suggest to the pope the great debts of the house, and the real want and poverty they laboured under: he besought the monks, with tears falling, 'if he had used any with harshness or with injustice, that they would forgive, and testify their love and reconciliation by giving him the farewell token of kisses;' they all addressed him with that mark of valediction: he then desired to be borne to the shrine, where, with his last breath, he uttered these words, *O Holy Alban! whom I have loved and addressed as my best aid, as I have existed and lived by thy help, so, O glorious saint! defend me from the pains of Hell!* He died on the 6th Cal. March 1308, and was buried, by the abbot of Waltham, in the choir before the great altar, and near to the two former abbots; in token of the love and esteem they had borne to each other when living: united by those principles which are everlasting, they wished to be as little separated as possible, in all the events of future existence.

John IV. the
26th abbot.

HUGO DE EVERSDEN.

John Maryns was succeeded by Hugo de Eversden (a), who ruled this abbey about 18 years, and died in 1326. He is said to have improved the revenues of the abbey, (but in what manner shall appear,) and to have purchased the manor of Caldecot, near Baldock, and other fair possessions. He procured from king Edward III. many great donations; as a crucifix of gold set with jewels; a cup of silver, gilt, of great value; sundry Scottish relics; timber for repairing the choir; and 100l. in money.

Hugo the 27th
abbot.

One of the first works which employed the attention of this man was to build a chapel to the holy virgin, in order to shew her a more especial honour: in this he was greatly assisted by one Reginald, a clerk of Rome; and with large sums from Walter de Langley and Alicia his wife. When this chapel was finished, an image of the virgin, richly habited, was set up. The true motives that urged Hugo to this work were such as, in those days, were called pious: and it was a frequent practice to build and dedicate altars and chapels to her worship. A chapel argued greater honour and piety than an altar; and, if the same was placed at the east end of the church, (as may be

(a) So called from a place of that name in the county of Cambridge.

Hugo the 27th
 abbot.

seen in some cathedrals,) it intimated the preference, or pre-eminence, which the founder intended above the Godhead. But, beside this, it is very probable that the Virgin's altar, which stood in the south wing, might be gone to decay; or might not be large enough to receive the devotion of all her votaries: and, as her mediation seems to have been much sought, and the oblations large, it was fit to give all possible accommodation to the offerers. It is likely, too, that the cost and charge of this work was so great as to create part of that vast debt which lay as a burthen on the abbey during the whole rule of Hugo. There is reason to think that at first the wall, which now forms the passage in the anti-chapel, was not built. This antichapel, which is 48 feet long and the width of the church, was the place to which the devout resorted, and where they waited till there was room in the chapel to receive them; which room, or space, could be but scanty and narrow, when the monks all attended, to chaunt the service (a).

In Hugo's time, great ruins of the church happened: the roof of the south wing fell in: great part of the south wall, over the long cloister, fell down, occasioned by the water from the roof having penetrated the top and loosened the work; by this sudden ruin one monk was killed: the cloaca also fell in, and one monk and a boy perished. So that great repairs became necessary.

The prior of Wymundham, William de Somerton, refused all obedience, and was quite rebellious, until at length brought to terms: and indeed the whole rule and government of Hugo received many interruptions, and was full of vexations and troubles. During the early part of his rule, the cells were disobedient and rebellious: and he was continually embroiled with the townsmen, and great dissension arose concerning their respective rights and jurisdictions. The townsmen were under an obligation, and had always been accustomed, to grind at the abbot's mills; but they now refused, (in the beginning of Hugo's government,) and furnished themselves with hand-mills; the abbot prosecuted, and probably exasperated them by his rigid proceedings. They had likewise been used to attend the abbot's sessions for the liberty, (then held at no fixed seasons,) as other men of the liberty did and had been used to do; but now, warm with resentment, they availed themselves of the general confusion of the kingdom, combined against the monks, revived old claims, set up new ones, and, at last, after a violent struggle, they obtained from the abbot a charter of privileges, in the last year of his rule. This is the sum: but, as it will serve to shew the temper and spirit of the times,

(a) See more of this chapel in the life of John Wheathampstead.

and discovers the beginning of the corporation, I will be more circumstantial in the detail of these contests and struggles (a). Hugo the 27th abbot.

When the townsmen had furnished themselves with hand-mills, the abbot endeavoured to suppress them; and one, named Robert de Lymbury, resisted the bailiff, named William Peacock, who had orders to distrain, or seize, on his mill, and bring away the upper-mill-stone. The bailiff forbore to proceed farther, and the abbot brought his action against Lymbury; and the king's writ (here inserted at large, and dated at Windsor, February 1, in the 7th year of our reign) directs Lymbury to appear before the justiciary (Leicester), to answer in a trespass, on a certain day and place. Lymbury appeared, and found sureties for trying the cause. His sureties appeared, but did not bring Lymbury; on which, a precept issues from the justiciary to four sureties (who offered) to bring his body to Barnet, on Tuesday, three weeks before Easter. He came not: and he was bound, by two sureties, to appear at St. Alban's, on the eve of Pentecost. Now began the trial: the counsel for the abbot pleaded a damage of 60l. by the use of these hand-mills: Robert answered, that he hindered not the bailiff in taking the mill-stone, but that the bailiff could not carry it out; on which he turned him out of the house, and shut his doors. When the charge, at opening the trial, was read, he put himself on his country (b), *ponit se super patriam*, (which hath continued as a phrase used to this day on the like occasion,) and alleged that he never injured the abbot, by using this mill, in the damage of 100 shillings. However, the jury gave damages to the abbot, in the amount of sixty pounds; and Lymbury was committed to goal (*gaolæ*), whence he was discharged, on paying a fine of 20 shillings, and giving surety, with two pledges, not to offend in the like again.

Three other suits of the like nature the abbot prosecuted against three other townsmen: and, soon after, they ill treated a monk, named Henry St. Neot; they also broke open a house in the town, belonging to the abbot, carried away many of the goods, and threw down all the trees, &c. And the villains, or copyholders, of Watford, catching this kind of contagious love of mischief and insult, robbed the fishponds at Watford that belonged to the abbey, to the no small prejudice, loss, and grievance, of the monastery.

The general state of the kingdom was, at this time, very dissolute: the people, from seeing great licentiousness prevail at court and among the great, were ready enough to follow the example, and to

(a) Extracted from Walsingham's MS.

(b) On a charge of felony, the prisoner says he will be tried by *God and his country*. An appeal of too serious a nature to be made by the guilty.

Hugo the 27th abbot. think light of any enormity which they chose, in their wanton undacity, to commit.

And here (in St. Alban's,) great disorders, beside the above, were daily practised: but twelve of the principal men of the town came to the abbot, and intreated him not to relate to Thomas, earl of Lancaster, (then resting in the monastery, on his journey to London,) the crimes and trespasses committed in the town; for, they would rectify all disorders, and conform to the laws of the land. The abbot, trusting to these false promises, complied with their request; but, as soon as the earl left the town, a servant of the abbot was caught and very ill treated: and, to shew their enmity the more, they erected a gallows in the market, and affixed an axe to the same, fastened by a chain, with a written threat, *that whoever refused to consent and join in their contrivances should be beheaded.* Next day, the above-mentioned twelve principals of the town came to the abbot, claiming certain privileges: at first they were moderate and gentle in their requests; then more earnest; and, at length, proceeded to threats, and spoke in a high tone: the abbot, with short deliberation, requested them to put their claims into writing, digest them into articles, and bring them to him four days hence. The twelve could not wait so long, but, next day, came to the abbot, and presented an indenture, containing the articles, and demanded immediate answer. They were as follow.

1st. 'The commons of the town (*communitas villæ*) supplicate the abbot and convent, that they would yield up to them their privileges and a charter thereof, as they had ever used and enjoyed from the making of the said charter, until they had been hindered in the same by the last abbot; as the charter itself will set forth, and as is witnessed by a book in the King's Treasury, called *Domusday*, wherein their town is styled a *borough* and they *burgesses*.

2^d. 'Also they intreat, that leave be given them to choose two burgesses to go to the king's parliament, according to the liberty granted to any other borough, and as they had used in time past.

3^d. 'Item, that they might have leave to make answer, in all matters of inquisition and pleas before the justices itinerant, by twelve men chosen in the said town, without any admixture of strangers(a).

4th. 'Item, that the assize of ale and bread might be observed and kept by twelve men of their vill, or town, being burgesses and sworn, as hath been accustomed in time past.

(a) *Sine conjunctione forinsecorum.* By this it appears, that the first idea of a *foreigner* was a man not of our vicinage.

5th. 'Item

5th. 'Item, that they may have common, in the lands, woods, waters, fisheries, and other commodities, as is contained in Domusday, and as they had enjoyed formerly. Hugo the 27th abbot.

6th. 'Item, that they be allowed to have hand-mills, and be indemnified in the losses they have sustained by defending the same.

7th. 'Item, that the bailiff of the town (an officer appointed by the abbot) should be sworn, and should do and perform all executions (or king's writs) without interference or mention of the bailiff of the liberty.'

These articles were exhibited to the abbot in the consistory, and a ready answer was given to each article by word of mouth; but, because every answer was not put into writing, as they had demanded, the twelve left the abbey in great wrath, and returned to the town. This interview happened on the octave of the virgin St. Agnes, or on January 21, about one o'clock; and, about six in the evening, the townsmen, some on foot and some on horses, approached the gate at Holywell, (probably a gate near the water,) and began the assault with great clamour and casting of stones, while some were putting fire to the gate. The abbot foresaw this in the morning, and had brought in for defence, of servants, tenants, and dependants, to the number of 200, beside monks. This tumult and siege lasted about ten days, to the Cal. of February; and the defenders maintained their ground, and repelled the assailants in every attack, submitting, with great patience, to long watchings and much fasting: for, it was necessary to deal out the provisions with strict frugality.

The king, then at Windsor, shewed great concern for this affront on his church, as he called it, (for, he boasted himself the patron,) and sent a brief to the sheriff, to take with him the *posse comitatus*, and suppress, if necessary, with force of arms, the violence and audacity of these evil-doers, and make proclamation of his peace; and if, after the proclamation and inhibition, he should find any of these rebels on the spot, he should seize and confine them in prison, until he received a farther mandate from the court, how to proceed with them.' On the Cal. of February the sheriff came and read the proclamation: on which the assailants conceived some degree of fear, and no longer bore arms, or terrified the monks with appearance of hostility; but they supplied the defects of fighting with reproaches and invectives: they had also formed a sort of confederacy with some of the neighbouring towns, and with certain of the Londoners, and bound themselves by an oath, and collected money, to hire certain lawyers to defend them and procure their liberties.

The

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abbot.

The abbot spared no pains to resist their malice: and, on the 9th day of February, six of the townsmen, with some friends out of the country, and others fit for mediation and treaty, came to the abbot, and requested him to appoint a day, wherein both sides might treat of a pacification, at London, and in the church of St. Paul. On that day the proctors appeared: but the townsmen renewed the attack on the monastery, and were again repulsed; though about 80 of them passed four or five nights, in traversing all round the abbey, and forming ambuscades, with intent to catch any of the defenders who might try to go out in the night; one poor wretch (a) of the town, being on this duty at the gate called Werngate, was surprised by the garrison, and, being made prisoner, was, like a thief, committed to prison.

The townsmen and their counsellors obtained a writ (b) of the king, directed to the abbot, commanding him to forbear farther molestations to the townsmen, and to place all liberties, privileges, and franchises, on the same footing as was set forth in the book of Domusday: and the king directed a brief to the treasurer and chamberlain of his exchequer, requiring them to search that book, and make report therefrom, what concerned the parties.

This book set forth (after recounting the land of the vill to be taxed at ten hides) *that there were four men freeborn, and sixteen copyholders (villani), and forty-six burgesses, or inhabitants in the town: for, the Villani and Francigeni were on the land, and the ten hides must have comprehended a great part of the country adjoining. It says also, There is one park for the wild beasts of the woods and one great fish-pool.* Which park was the old park of Kingsbury, and comprehended all the land from that place up to the street and market-place, and the pool was in it. It says also, *The burgesses have only half an hide.* This was produced and pleaded by the townsmen, but was perceived to make very little in their favor. Then the abbot's council produced the grant of Henry II. where he says, *He confers, on the church of St. Alban, the vill of St. Alban, with every liberty, or privilege, which a borough ought to have.*

It was instantly seen, that, by the word *Burgus*, they were in no corporate, or united, capacity, and not independent of the abbey, nor in any other light than as inhabitants and householders; and that their state and condition was confirmed, by writing and seal, to the abbey. The townsmen had nothing to reply: but the king's counsel, seeing that this very privilege and right was injurious to the church,

(a) Ribaldus.

(b) Dated February 8, 11th an. regni.

and had been the cause of its great sufferings, they moved, to have the matter adjourned, for a further hearing at Westminster, to the 6th of the Ides of March, and there to be discussed by the more wise men of the kingdom. On this day the parties appeared, and, after much argument and disceptation, the three brethren, who represented the abbey, and Thomas Pyrot, professor of civil law and furnished with authority to consent, agreed and obtained the others consent, that twenty-four true and faithful men of the town should walk the bounds and describe the ancient limits; and, when the same were by them well marked and described, they should present them to the abbot, to be confirmed by him under the common seal; he first giving seizin, to the townsmen and their successors, of every thing within the said limits. This seemed a gracious condescension in the abbey council; but it was granting, in truth, what the town wished, and more than they could prove by Domesday to be their right. However, the church proposed this expedient, and thought they got rid of some burdensome duties and some very sturdy competitors. The twenty-four were chosen, and, assembling in the consistory, they made oath for the faithful walking and marking the true and ancient bounds; and this description (a), written in law French, was sealed in form, and preserved many years in the archives of the church. The substance was this.

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From Gonnerston to the sheepfold of Kingsbury, thence to the corner of Downehedge, thence to the corner of Tonman ditch, thence unto the Grange of St. Peter, thence to Bernate wood, thence unto Stone Crouch, thence to the corner of the church of St. Peter toward the left, thence unto the Grange of John, the son of Richard Baldewyn, thence unto Tonman ditch and Sopwell-lane, thence to the Croft of John Hampton, thence to Green Lane end, thence to Eyewood lane, thence to Holywell Brigg, and thence to Gonnerston by the water of the river. It was now agreed that the town contained within these bounds shall be a borough, and for a borough holden; and all the tenements within the said bounds shall be burgages; and all the good men, their heir heirs, and successors, within the said bounds dwelling, shall be burgesses, and for burgesses holden for ever; and that they may, out of themselves, elect two burgesses to go to every parliament. This limit comprehended in it the abbey, and all its buildings, courts, gardens, &c. and it was agreed, on the part of the town, that nothing in this grant (for it was considered still as a concession from the abbot) should turn to the prejudice of the said church, but the same shall have and use all its other franchises and rights, which to the church

(a) The deed calls it *renewing* the bounds, as if the limits had been formerly fixed, but till this time neglected and disregarded.

Hugo the 27th abbot. are appendant; it was also agreed, that nothing in this grant shall bar the abbot and convent from grinding at the mills on the said river, although they may belong to any of the good men of the town (a).

The abbot was willing to consent to this letter of concord, out of a prudent necessity, and in obedience and respect to the royal pleasure; having regard to the tempestuous condition of the state, and because the kingdom was almost destitute of all remedy of law. This is expressly said by my author, as an apology for many imprudences committed during the rule of abbot Hugo.

But, when the letter of concord was produced by Hugo, read in full chapter, and ordered by him to be signed and sealed, Lo! the articles made their appearance as part of the compact, and, these being read out distinctly, the monks began to mutter, and look on each other with emotion and astonishment: then, with one voice, they said they would choose to die rather than to sign and seal to such terms; and they besought Richard Paxton, the archdeacon, to pronounce, in the name of all and every one singly, their refusal to attest. The archdeacon entered his protest in writing in the name of all present, giving it as a reason of refusal, that such proceeding was betraying the interests of the body, would prove a dangerous precedent, and be followed by great losses.

The abbot then, fearing what evils might ensue from this refusal, produces a letter from the king, (which the townsmen had procured at the day when the compromise was made), commanding him to put the abbey seal to the said agreement. The archdeacon and monks refused, and shewed more indignation; and, rising from their seats, quitted the consistory. But at length, the abbot representing the danger of withstanding the king, and farther provoking the town, they, with great reluctance, consented to sign; though not without making a solemn protestation against the act, in the presence of John De Maidford, and John Le Hay, two notaries. This instrument is there set forth at length, and dated 15 Cal. Ap. anno 1327, reciting the objections made by the archdeacon, but ending with the full consent of the abbot, the seal affixed, and the attestation of John le Hay the notary.

In this state was the government of the town: that is, having the privilege of electing juries, not to be and appear at the abbot's session, but at a view of Frankpledge or Leet, with a bailiff chosen by the

(a) This deed may be found in the roll of patents in the Tower, in the 1st year of Edward III. part II. MS. 28; and likewise in the archives of the corporation.

townsmen: and this probably held and continued until the grant of incorporation made by Edward VI. in 1553. But this effort of the townsmen was intended to detach themselves from the rule and authority of the abbot, and to erect themselves into a degree of corporate capacity, for their better government at home, and the furtherance of their business in the great council of the nation.

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abbot.

But it appears also, by the archives of the said corporation, that burgeses had been sent into parliament as early as the 35th of Edward I. when Simon de Trewyk and Adam atte Stile were sent from this town, as representatives; and, at the same time, John de Sumery and Gerard de Brabroc were deputed as knights of the shire.

On the completion of this business, my author remarks, the townsmen were highly elated, and now thought themselves to be in the most compleat, if not new, manner, perfect burgeses; and demanded, in very threatening terms, the common of Bernate Heath, &c. The abbot gave orders to the seneschal to comply, but not in haste; and, after some delay and preparations made, the seneschal repaired thither, and gave them seizin by delivery of the branch. The townsmen followed in a great crowd, and began, on entering the heath, or wood, to break down the branches of the beech trees, and to take seizin for themselves: and, after some hours of enjoyment in this licentious way, they marched back into the town, bearing these branches as in triumph. They destroyed all the hedges and fences in Frithwode and Eyewood, in the name of seizin; and threw great branches into the abbot's fishpools, and also caught the fish; and, for five years after, they continued to hunt the hares, rabbits, and all game there found: they also set up their handmills, to the number of 80, in and about the town. They did infinite mischief to the timber, and did not spare to cut and carry away whatever they could; and this licence, augmented into mere malice, was not restrained till the time of the next abbot, who brought them back to their former state of moderation and order, and made them pay damages for these excesses.

But another incident added to the vexation of the poor abbot at this time; a knight, though unknown to him, requested one day to speak to his lordship, and, being introduced to the parlour, the old abbot entered, and the knight said he had a secret to communicate, that was of great importance to the abbey and the church; but it must be related to the abbot in private, and entrusted to him alone, and never be divulged again. The abbot conducted this friendly informer to his study in his lodgings; at which place the

Hugo the 27th abbot removed the domestics and chaplains, and, big with expectation to hear the secret, shut the door and sat down. The knight rushed on him, seized him by the throat, and, with the other hand, drew out a knife, or dagger, and swore he would cut his throat, if he did not give him instantly 20l. The terrified old man complied, and the knight took his leave, and passed through the cloisters and crowds below as an honest man.

The character of this abbot is, that he was very little feared and less beloved. He was reputed to be of a very poor spirit (a), as the above instance shews. He was of a tall and graceful stature, and reckoned a very handsome man; and he had no small tincture of vanity and affectation, which he gratified in great feasts and entertainments given to the gentry, and especially to the ladies, of the neighbourhood; the resort of which last was greater than decency allowed, or his dignity required. As an instance of his munificence, it is recorded, that being once at Wymundham, and visiting a gentleman named Symon de Heterfete (since called Herfeth), he was there splendidly entertained for some days; at his departure he took notice of an infant son of his host, lying in the cradle, and gave the child a pension of forty shillings for life, out of the house of Wymundham: which pension was paid, to the great loss of that house, during about 50 years.

He died with very little warning of his end, having suffered much anxiety of mind, from innumerable law suits and many cross events near home. However, he died, says the MS. *infelici nocte*: and the man, whose *character* is despised, will do no good by his *precepts* and *words*. This was in the year 1326.

The state of the treasury was such as alarmed the officers: a debt of 5000l. to sundry creditors; pensioners, who had a claim of 24l. 18s.; and corrodars, to the number of 54 or more; beside great waste of the woods, such as had never been before. He had received, for wood sold in his time, 7605l.; and 700l. (*de auxilio*) as aid to the monastery from the tenants; also from the priors of the cells, as aid, 6000l.; and 100l. from the king. He had received of talliage from the tenants 1000l. (b); as aid from the vicars 100l.; for corrodies sold at the abbey, 1077l.; and 1000l. for corrodies sold in the cells.

For the better maintenance of his splendor and shew, he first hit on the expedient of letting long leases, and taking a good sum in hand

(a) Vecordissimus.

(b) A kind of excise on their goods and moveables, when the abbey was assessed to the king or the pope.

for so doing : and here follows a list of such grants, and the sums paid. Hugo the 27th
abbot.

To Andrew de Medefte, the manor of Combes in Suffex, for the term of his life ; and 100l. laid down.

The manor of Pynefield to Symon de Perkote, for 16 years ; and 40l. to be paid, yearly, for the first 5 years.

The manor of Walden, with two mills, to William Legat, for 10 years ; and 50l. yearly, for the two first years.

The manor of Barnet, with some assigned rents in East Barnet, and the mill of Agate, for 10 years ; and 24 marks down.

The manor of Caldecot to John de Gavelock, for the term of 5 years ; and 40l. in hand.

The manor of Wynflow, with the market rents and a mill, for 100 marks yearly rent ; and 100 marks in hand.

The manor of Richard Alexander, in Langley, for a term of 9 years ; and 24l. for the 4 first years to himself.

A meadow at Richmereworth to John Windrugge, for 30 years ; and 20l. to himself.

The manor of Sandrugge for 20 years ; and, for the 10 first years, 180l. to himself.

For a mill let there for 20 years, he received, for himself, in 10 years, 30l.

For the manor of Northaw, he received down, for 6 years, 60l.

For the church of Consciff he received 40 marks for 5 years.

For the manor of Codicote, with a mill, 100l.

For 2 mills at Norton, 40 marks.

For the mill at Watford, 20 marks.

This caused a loss to the monastery of 647l. ; and he also gave away wood and timber to divers persons, to the value of 930l.

He is excused, in these excesses, from a consideration of the great expence and damage he incurred by entertaining and aiding the nobles, who rose up against the king ; from the great losses he sustained on the farms ; and from the many law suits he had been always involved in. It is farther said in his favour, that he was compelled to expend great sums in necessary reparations ; that many of these corrodies had been sold in the time of his predecessor, which had now got up to the sum of 299l. if valued in money, beside the necessary cloathing, equal to 14l. a year more, and an extra expence of corn yearly of 4l.

To these extenuating circumstances may be added the great expence of building the virgin's chapel, and, perhaps, the exactions made by Gavelton and Spencer : for, these favourites would scarcely spare the clergy,

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abbot.

clergy, who could not resist or oppose them, when they practised the boldest extortions on the lords and barons, who could resist. As the rapacity of these minions, and the general licentiousness of the times, doubtless called for uncommon supplies, so must our abbot have been obliged to devise uncommon means to raise these sums; and part of his unpopularity with the townsmen may have proceeded from a too rigid exaction of all the rights which a feudal lord could, in those days, demand: it was, however, attended with this advantage to the townsmen, that, whereas their rights were before vague and undefined, and seemed to depend much on the will of the abbot, they now got them ascertained and confirmed by a charter, and became a corporate body. It is observable, through the whole of the dispute, that the king, in this instance at least, pursued his father's policy, and sided with the people, in order to curb the power of the church: and the abbot's too ready compliance, as the monks thought, with the king's mandate, must have tended to lessen him in the esteem of his brethren of the cloister, who considered his concessions to the townsmen as sacrilege. He died therefore unlamented, and unesteemed, either within the monastery or without.

RICHARD WALLINGFORD.

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

This man was elected on the 30th of October, and ruled almost nine years, dying in 1335. He derived his name from the place of his birth, as was the common practice; for, no man was distinguished by his family name. He was the son of a blacksmith, and had been educated at Oxford, where he attained great fame for his early piety and learning. The particulars of his youth are these. He was bereft of his parents at ten years of age; on which the prior of Wallingford, named Kykeby, in compassion to the boy took him under his care, and, finding him to possess a docile genius, prepared him for the university of Oxford; at which place, his conduct and abilities growing conspicuous, he was, in due time, appointed to read in public that great standard

standard of divinity, *the sentences of Lombard*. After nine years passed in that duty, he came to dwell in this abbey, where he had been admitted a monk long before, though allowed to be absent as a public lecturer. He had been much encouraged in his studies by the last abbot, and, at his death, this young man was elected in his room.

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

The forms of the election being passed, he set out to the pope, to receive confirmation, and was absent nine months. He paid his duty to the pope at Avignon : and it is noted, that all his expences and donations amounted to 953l. 10s. 11d.

With the pope he had met with many delays, and objections were made that threatened to annul the election. It was said, he had brought no certificate of the vacancy, and no letter from the king to recommend or to allow : and, after intimidating our abbot many days, the pope was pleased to say, that he had, in kindness, thought of a way to expiate those faults, and to suffer the business to proceed—which was to go to his chamberlain and agree for a tax. Richard addressed himself to the chamberlain and officers of the Papal Treasury, who beginning to mention a tax, he answered, ‘ He knew of no tax, ‘ to which the monastery was liable, but one ounce of gold every ‘ year for its exemption. ‘ The officers said, ‘ they found marked in their ‘ register an arrear of 720 marcs, as due for a visitation, in the name ‘ of a vacancy : and, for the entertainment of these supposed visitors, ‘ 120 marcs more.’ Richard was struck dumb : but, when he recovered his speech, they compelled him to swear on the Bible, that he would pay these sums at certain stated periods ; and they added a threat of excommunication if he failed ; or if, in case of failure, he did not return to the pope’s court within five months.

On these terms, after being long detained, he was permitted to depart ; and, landing in England, he came to his manor of Crokeſly, or Crosley, for rest and repose : here he found himself afflicted with a severe pain in his left eye, which brought on a total blindness. He went next, and abode some time at his manor of Hexton and Rykenham ; and waited on the king, then at Northampton, to do homage for his baronies, and receive the temporalities.

On St. Alban’s day, the abbot invited to a splendid dinner, as had been the custom, the friends and tenants of the abbey : and now comes one John Aygnell, and demands a certain silver cup, *in order that he may serve the abbot, and present the same when he was dining ; for that he held his land in Redburn by that service*. And, stretching out his hand to reach the cup, he could only touch it ; *but that was enough,*

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

enough, he said, *he was in the seizin of his office*; and began to be very troublesome. The company interposed; the abbot refused to be served by him; John claimed the cup as his perquisite, still maintaining that he held his land by the service of *Grand Butler* to the abbot; and the cellarer was called, who alledged that they had no such office, and no land holden by such a tenure: on this Aygnell pretended to be ill used; but quitted not his seat at the dinner. This man's name adheres to the land to this day.

Soon after this feast, the abbot determined on an examination of the convent, and the state and condition of its revenues and expences, and the proceedings of all its officers: he took to him, for assistants, two notaries, Richard Prior of Tynmouth, and John de Sullfull. He spent five days in making all proper inquiries, but completed not the whole examination in three years, as well because of the absence of particular persons as because he thought a little dissimulation necessary, fearing to discover too much. He therefore set himself to compile a tract (a), concerning the statutes enacted in the general chapters of the order, and from the decrees of the legates Otho and Othobon. These he digested in sixteen articles, and ordained that they should be recited in the cloister, that is, to the monks, three times in the year;—for, *aliquà erant notabiliter reformata*: one article taught the law and decrees against Symonists.

After some space of time the abbot enters the chapter-house, in full assembly; and calls before him, by proclamation, the underwritten officers, or *obedientarii*, namely, Hugo de Langley, the *sacrist*; William de Wynflowe, *coquinarius*; Richard de Heterfete, (or Herfeth as now called), *Almoner*; John de Woderone, *camerarius*; and John de Tywyng, *refectorarius*; and the crime laid to their charge was, that, in spite of the frequent admonitions of the abbot, they had neglected and refused to pay to him the tenths, which the king (now Edw. III.) had exacted of the abbot, and which had been granted by the clergy in convocation, during the vacancy on the death of abbot Hugo (b); and therefore, for their neglect, and obstinate refusal, he must now declare them deposed from their offices, as the penalty held forth to them at first. He then declared them degraded from their stalls (*à stallis*), in the choir, in the chapter, and in the refectory; placed

(a) Beginning thus, *Auscultate, obedientiæ filii, quæ statuta gratis et appositè publicavit et sanxciuit tenenda approbans, priusquam voluit visitationis suæ articulos publicare, sciens et prudens, &c.*

(b) These were the taxes granted to the king, at the same time that others were granted by the Parliament.

in a state of perpetual silence, rendered incapable of any office or any benefice whatsoever; and to continue in this condition, until, by humble penitence, they should merit to have their punishments dispensed or removed. He farther enjoined them to abstain from any communication with the brethren, until they should merit the benefit of absolution; and ordered them to undergo certain corporal discipline, every fourth and sixth holyday.

Richard II. the
28 h abbot.

On this, a great concern was visible on the face of every one present: and, the abbot retiring to the parlour with the prior and some of the elder monks, he inveighed in strong terms against the contumacy of the offenders: those who were present undertook for them (a), that they would amend their conduct, and comply with the mandate of the church. The abbot then absolved them from the said sentence, enjoined a private and secret repentance, and directed them to make oath never to offend in the like manner again. From this day began a kind of combination, not to call it a conspiracy, to rise against the abbot: some wished to depose him, saying, that the leprosy had seized him and was making quick progress on him; some wished to ordain him coadjutor, or tutor: others contrived to subject both the house and the barony entirely to the king; but in hopes to have the care thereof committed to their hands: and, others, in order to create the greater tumult and disturbance, were proposing to take from him the daily pittances which were served to his table from the monks' kitchen.

The abbot was not in the least moved; but went on, with much seeming indifference, to rule and govern, or to yield and concede a little, as he saw necessary, and according to the reports which were brought to him; but gathering this lesson of admonition, that, if he relaxed or diminished any thing of the prelate, it would be with great diminution of the master. Yet, notwithstanding this seeming tranquillity, he was long after heard to make a solemn protestation, that argued how much he had been secretly moved with chagrin, when he declared, in the presence of the two priors and others, 'that he should ever consider those, who should attempt to impugn his state and rank, or the privileges of the abbey which the king had given him to defend, as conspirators against the state and throne.'

He proposed to the senior monks to make some grateful present to the keeper of the king's Privy Seal, named Richard de Byrclive (or Berkley): and, with their approbation and consent, it was agreed to give four of their choice books, namely, their fine *Terence*, their

(a) Prestitâ cautione.

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Virgil, their *Quintilian*, and *St. Jerom* contra Rufinum. This was done, with a view to future favour in their business with the king, as well as for services already done : and, though these were inestimable books to a clerk, and the source of all consolation to the church, yet it was allowed that he should have power to sell them. On this, one present suggested that they should be sold first, and the money given to Berkley. But, after a diversity of opinion on the matter, and by communication with him, it was agreed to sell him 32 of their books for 5*l.* To this the chapter consented, and that the abbot should retain a moiety of the sum. When he received the money, he assigned, out of the same, 15*l.* to the refectory, and 10*l.* to the coquina, for the better discharge of their respective offices. The younger monks blamed this transaction, as bartering away the spiritual food, to serve the casual exigencies of a carnal kind. However, this Berkley was afterwards made bishop of Durham, and then he restored many of these books ; and others were sold by his executors to abbot Mentmore.

Richard was very minute in all inquiries made on his visitation of the cells, and of the abbey's estates ; and caused all the tenants and dependants to present themselves before him, and acknowledge his rights and their duties.

At Redburn there had been a sort of priory ; though the monks were all on an equal footing, and lived in the vicarage-house ; and it was rather considered as a place of recess for the sick than of devotion for the well and healthy. But now the abbot ordained, that three monks should be here on duty for one month, and then be relieved by three others ; and that, in going and coming, they should be always conveyed in a handsome vehicle (*honeſtá veſturá*), to be provided by the chantor and the camerarius.

The townsmen still withstood the rights of the abbot, and, when he held a view of frankpledge, or (as now called) a court-leet, they would neither enter the same, nor suffer the court to make and appoint the assize of bread and ale, as formerly : on which, the abbot directed his seneschals, John de Munden, and Richard de Belishall(a), to appoint four constables for the respective wards of the town. He directed also, by his seneschal, that the bailiff should, every year, at the conclusion thereof, deliver to the treasurer a fair and distinct list of the gaol delivery ; of the chattels of felons ; and of every transaction that passed under the green wax, which denoted the authority

(a) These are styled *Servientes in Banco*, that is, of great rank in the law.

of the court. He directed also, that no person detained in gaol (which at that time was indeterminate) should be bailed, or delivered to Mainprise, without the consent of the abbot; and not then, unless the offence was bailable; and, if it was, that the prisoner should provide two, three, or more, sureties, to be bound with him jointly and severally in 10l. or 20l. each, that they would bring the prisoner into court on the day appointed; and that this obligation, or recognizance, should be lodged in the hands of the abbot. The first statute that directs and regulates bail was made in the second year of Phil. and Mary; but this point of history shews the nature of bail before that time, and how rigorous it was when left to the discretion of the justice or judge.

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28th abbot.

In his inquiries, the abbot found, that certain of the tenants of the abbey were bound, by their tenure, to find him a certain number of horses for his journey, whenever he should visit Thynmount (a): that William de Harpsfield-Hall was liable to find him one horse; John de London, in the Park of Idelfre, one horse; William atte Welde, one horse; Matthew de la Veche, in the Park, one horse; the vicar of St. Peter, according to usage and custom, one horse; Lawrence of Aycote, for two tenements, two horses; and the camerarius (by virtue of some land held by him) and John Aygnell, of Redburn, one horse.

At this time died the prior, Robert Norton. And the abbot, having assembled the chapter on the third day after his burial, addressed the brethren in a set and formal speech, setting forth the public loss, &c. and recommending to their choice Nicholas de Flamstede. The monks had never seen or known of such a decency and formal advance towards any election; and some consternation was visible among them, as not knowing what was to follow. The abbot rose, and proclaimed, that, if any man knew either crime or fault in Nicholas, they should now declare it: a perfect silence ensued. The abbot then addressed Nicholas, and ordered the sub prior and the arch deacon to arise, and conduct him, between them, to the side of the abbot. Nicholas pleaded his unworthiness, and his incapacity, and strove to be excused; and shewed more tokens of humility than of absolute truth; but, before he could be heard, he was placed at the abbot's left hand. The abbot then addressed him in these words, 'Mr. Prior (*Domine Prior*), I re-
' commend unto you the care of all my brethren; that you will at
' all times be anxious for the safety of them, for the necessary honour
' of religion, and for the strict obedience that is due to the rule of St.
' Benedict.' And, causing several of the provincial decrees to be

(a) Tynmouth.

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

read, he added, ' If these men have lived, hitherto, in the observance of religion, it becomes them to be more observant for the future ; because you, O Holy Nicholas ! are promoted to a station of eminence, in order that, by your example, all others may receive instruction.'

This character was afterwards amply fulfilled : for, the most affectionate concord ever prevailed between this man and the abbot ; and it was the wish of Richard to have the prior for his successor.

The prioress of Sopwell, named Philippa, died ; and, instantly, great caballing ensued among the sisters, who wished to have the choice of a successor ; and in their minds they had fixed, with perfect unanimity, on one Alice de Hakeney. This coming to the knowledge of the abbot, (in whom alone was the power to make the prioress, without any consent or leave of the sisters), he dispatches thither the prior, with orders to appoint some other whom he might find qualified ; accordingly, the prior went, and, calling a full chapter, proceeded to a nomination much after the manner in which he had himself been elected ; and, to the disappointment of the female council, he directed that Alice de Pekesdene should be prioress : and she afterwards discharged the duty with great credit.

He thought it necessary, that every brother or sister, hereafter admitted, should repeat and sign a certain form, or declaration, obliging them, if possible, to a constant remembrance of the oath they were taking of their perfect submission to chastity, poverty, and obedience. And this was the more requisite, because, by omission, many of them were persuaded, that they were under the profession of no rule whatever. So necessary did he think it to guard and secure matters of great moment, by a punctilious observance of all the most minute circumstances that precede or concern them. Ceremonies in religious worship may, of themselves, and abstractedly taken, be of no use and of no moral tendency ; but, if considered as appertaining to the mental act, they are not only the expression of that act, but they excite it, prepare the mind for it, and become also an useful example unto others.

There came to the abbey a company of the Franciscans and Dominicans, with a request to take confessions and to preach in his jurisdiction. The abbot thought some examination necessary, previous to his consent ; he therefore asks one, whether he knew what were the cases reserved for the bishop or abbot : the frier could make no answer, and manifested utter ignorance ; *Qui idiota fuerat* (says Walsingham) *uti plerique sunt qui confessiones audire mereantur.* The

abbot replies, ‘ Why, if you are so void of piety and knowledge, how
 ‘ do you know that you can give absolution ?’ And the frier departed, ^{Richard II. the}
 not a little chagrined and mortified. For, the general exceptions were ^{28th abbot.}
 well known, and had been long (for bad memories) reduced, like
As in Presenti, to a few lines in verse ; thus

Qui facit incestum, deflorans atque homicida,
 Sacrilegus, patruī percussor, sic sodomita,
 Transgressor voti, perjurus, sortilegusque,
 Et mentita fides, faciens incendia, prolis
 Oppressor, blasphemus, hereticus, omnis adulter,
 Pontificem super his omnis denotus adibit.

None of this confessional tribe ever came again to abbot Richard.

We may here see the policy of the Romish Church : for, by granting these mendicants a power and authority to take confessions, it enabled these holy beggars to live ; and, by the exceptions, the popes saved the credit of religion ; for, beside these excepted crimes, there was very little to be either forgiven or confessed.

The townsmen, ever since the extorted grants from abbot Hugo, had assumed the title of burgessees ; and were in some degree *sui juris*. But, not content with impugning his civil authority, they became so alienated as to refuse obedience in all spiritual matters. And, for want of the strict hand of civil power, as formerly held over them, it was now notorious how profligate the morals of the people were grown, in the most audacious fraud and cozening, and in the most shameful commission of adultery and uncleanness. Among the most conspicuous offenders was one named Taverner ; and the abbot determined to punish him, if possible ; which might be done either in his court-leet or by his spiritual authority : two monks were sent to serve on him the summons ; and Walter de Amer sham, the abbot’s marshal, or equerry, (a lay office), accompanied, in order to attest the service. This being done, a violent fray ensued ; Taverner struck Amer sham ; a vast crowd assembled, chiefly of women, and fell on poor Amer sham. He had resisted the first assault of Taverner with such success as to dispatch and lay him prostrate : but, fatal success ! the vengeance of the women overpowered the marshal, and he was killed. On this the townsmen rose ; and, seizing the two summoners, and one Maidford, and others who came from the abbey, hurried them all away to the king’s coroner, then dwelling in the town. On which the coroner, named William de Band, and his companions, assigned to keep the peace of the king in the county of Hertford, gave it in express charge to Richard de Pereres, the sheriff of Hertford, that

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

that he have, on a certain day named, the bodies of Maidford, and the two summoners now in gaol before them at Brantfield, to answer for the death of Taverner, and of Amersham; and to bring thither also Richard, abbot of St. Alban, and Nicholas Broom, a monk, to answer on the same charge. They issued a precept also to the sheriff, commanding him to summon 24 men of the liberty, and 24 of the town of St. Alban, *probos et legales homines*, by whom inquisition might be taken and the truth known. The townsmen refused to obey, and said they would not be joined with men out of their jurisdiction, nor should the strangers hold any communication with them, in such inquisitions. On the day appointed, the townsmen appeared, and produced a writ from the king in these words.

‘ Edward, by the Grace of God, to our beloved and faithful William de Band, &c. keepers of our peace in the county of Hertford, health. Whereas, in a certain writ indented between our beloved in Christ the abbot of St. Alban and the townsmen of the said vill, concerning divers dissensions there arising, and which writ, being made patent, we have appointed and confirmed, it appears, and among other things is contained, that the said vill is a free borough, and the burghesses thereof have a jury of twelve men (*Duodenam*) from themselves, so ordered that they should have no commixture with strangers, nor strangers with them; with this exception, that when they themselves shall plead or are impleaded, the cause shall go, by the king’s writ, to the hundred court, as hath formerly ever been the usage; we charge and command you, that in all inquisitions of trespasses and felonies committed in the said vill, you allow the said burghesses to use and enjoy the said privileges, according to the tenor of the said letters patent.’

The abbot also, on his part, produced the king’s writ for setting at liberty the men imprisoned. The men of the hundred had assembled at Brantfield, and also those (that is, such as the sheriff had summoned to serve on the jury) out of two of the adjoining hundreds; and, with wonderful applause of all these, was the writ heard. The townsmen were here greatly disappointed and mortified: and, in fact, this arbitrary proceeding of the king vacated and rendered null their boasted charter of privilege; and the countrymen of the hundred saw, with great pleasure, the upstart consequence of the townsmen taken down: the men who had been indicted, and who were all tenants of the abbey, were thus set at liberty, without any form of trial. And this is an instance, among others in this reign, where the king interposed with a high hand, and perverted the ordinary course of law: for,
though

though he might have pardoned these men after a trial and conviction, yet he chose to keep within very strict bounds all the new powers which had been granted to the townsmen. The abbot also, and the archdeacon, who had been indicted as accessaries in the murder of Taverner, pleaded the King's pardon, and were discharged in their obligation to appear. But, at the end of ten days, the abbot indicted the townsmen before John de Cambridge and John Hay (a), judges, for the death of Amertham, and of one Elye, whom the townsmen had assaulted and killed in a fray, two or three years before.

Richard 1st the
2nd abbot.

The townsmen now turned their thoughts very seriously to terms of concord; and, at their request, a day was appointed for a conference, and an amicable compromise of all their differences. On the part of the abbot, there appeared Philip de Aylebury, the sheriff of Bedfordshire; master Richard Pereres; Richard Monchefy; John de Cambridge, the seneschal of the abbot; Sir William Symond, and John Slowmill, knights; John Poleyn; and William Louth; John de Haye, the sub-seneschal; and eight others, principal men of the neighbourhood. On the other side appeared only one citizen of London, named Symon Fraunceys; and one serjeant at Law, named Thomas Lincoln. The subject was no sooner opened than the townsmen renewed the claim of the handmills, and dwelt on this complaint with such earnestness and impudence that the business could not proceed. On that day nothing farther was done than to declare the right of the abbey, and to expose the insolence and obstinacy of the townsmen: and, on consultation, it was determined to proceed against them by a bill, without any favor or affection (b). It was now the year 1331, when, on the 15th of September the king's justices, Roger de Gray, and John de Cambridge, began to hold their session, called *trayle baston*, at Hertford, for the whole county: a third judge was master Robert le Bouster. Before which day the abbot provided a cask of wine, and good store of meat, fish, and other provisions: he sent his cellarer and some monks to prepare this, and to collect a quantity sufficient for a week's consumption, for the entertainment of the judges and the company assembled, who would choose to accept of hospitality at the priory.

The judges being seated in court, the king's letter patent was produced, addressed to the judges, and setting forth the sundry and manifold grievances and injuries done by the townsmen to the abbey and monks. The bill of indictment, contained in the letter, charges the

a) In those times an indictment might be lodged with a judge, before it came to the knowledge of a jury.

(b) Per placitum sine amore.

Richard II. the
2^d abbot.

townsmen with sundry cruel assaults made on the servants of the abbot; with wanton imprisonments; with wilfull mischief to any sort of property belonging to the abbey; and with some very forcible extorsions made on the abbot, such as threatening to cut off a servant's head, unless the abbot would enfeof a certain person in 50 acres of the land at Childwick: an exaction with which the abbot was forced to comply. The proof of these enormities was so full, that the townsmen made no defence, but petitioned to be fined only, and they would submit. One part of the charge was against the coroner John de Murden; who, in taking an inquisition on the murder of Amersham, had betrayed a manifest partiality or a shameful fear of the persons who were charged with that crime. A fine was imposed on each person singly and separately, with an injunction not to depart the court till security for payment was given, and not to approach the king's court, that is, to bring any complaint in future, until the fines were paid.

The handmills still continued a subject of debate; and the townsmen pleaded, that they were possessed of thirteen for time immemorial, and specified the particular houses to which they were annexed: but, on a hearing before the judges, the verdict was given in favour of the abbot: that his mills ever had ground the corn, that former abbots were seized of this right, that the writ to incorporate did not diminish this right, and that it was appendant to him as lord of the manor, and was a general and common right attached in the like manner to other lords. On this, four of the townsmen came to the abbot and offered to rent one of his mills, and proposed to give him 40*l.* a year rent, repair the same, and make the payments regularly at the four quarters of the year; and on this condition, they would give up the grant of all their liberties (a), and make void the same in the king's chancery and all his other courts; they engaged to grind at no other mill, except it was the article of malt, and for this they would continue to use the hand-mills. The abbot listened to this proposal, and spoke fair; but intimated that they had caused great expence and costs to the abbey, and he must ask an indemnification of 200 marks, to be paid in five years. The parties here separated, as it was necessary to consider these terms; whether they could be accepted by the townsmen, on the one part, and whether the prior and officers, on the other part, would approve and abide by the same. On consultation in private, the prior and sub-prior, the precentor and arch-deacon, were ready to approve and promise performance on their part. One of the

(a) As obtained under abbot Hugo.

monks, named Richard de Pyrton, bethought himself of an expedient to quicken the treaty, and to bring the other party to concord. Accordingly he goes out, in the evening, to one of the leading men, (who, for divers small offences, had made himself obnoxious to the law,) and, in secret, he advises him to consult his own safety and make terms of some sort, to avoid prosecution from the abbot; Pyrton told his mind very freely, some beginning was made towards a mutual confidence, and each undertook, at parting, to adhere to their opinions and their promises: the substance of this oblique treaty was soon known to all the confederacy.

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

It was now the month of May, exactly one year after the atrocious murder of Amersham, when the townsmen came to the abbot, and made a voluntary surrender of the charter that had given cause to all this discord. They gave up also a charter of confirmation obtained from Edward II. which, with some fraud and concealment, had comprehended certain grants very prejudicial to the Church, having been obtained in an artful and crafty manner. They gave up, beside, another confirmation made by Edward II.; likewise one made by Edward III.; and also the arbitration made by the knights sent by the king to make peace between the litigants. They gave up, at the same time, the perambulation of their borough, and all their other briefs and records whatever. They brought all the mill-stones, and deposited them in the church, in token of renouncing for ever the right of grinding at home: and they presented to the abbot the three keys and the chest itself, as a token of surrendering all their corporate rights, and to abolish entirely all the hopes and prospects of a community, or body, in future. On this free and liberal submission, the abbot began to note them with words of respect and esteem, and the interview ended with an invitation to dinner at the abbey: mutual presents began to pass and friendship to take place, all departing with perfect silence as to their own faults and misdemeanours. The deeds were all sent, by the abbot, to John bishop of Winchester, then chancellor, to be kept and preserved in the archives of the chancery.

In this prosperous state of the abbot's affairs, he thought it necessary to have, from the townsmen, a formal renunciation of all their former rights, privileges, and immunities, which they had extorted from abbot Hugo. This was drawn very full and comprehensive, and enrolled in the common bench; and herein the townsmen renounce, for themselves and their heirs, all private mills; and consent to grind all their corn and malt (a), and to full all their coarse

(a) *Omnimoda blada et brasia.*

Richard II. the cloths, at the abbot's mills; and to pay for the same all the accustomed tolls and stallage, such as had been usually paid for time out of mind. This was signed by four or five of the principal men, and sealed with their respective seals; and is dated in the sixth year of Edward III.

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

During these commotions, the monks, and their tenants at Redburn, had refused to be assessed toward the fifteenth, which the convocation had granted to the king, and which was a tax on land and realty as well as on cattle and personals. These men pleaded an exemption, founding the same on a deed, as ancient, they said, as Edward the Confessor's time: but the abbot, on perusing the same, soon discovered the forgery; for, it contained words and expressions not known in England, till the coming of the Normans (a), and the style was very unlike the Saxon, or English, used before that period. Being convicted of this fallacy, they departed, without any degree of that confidence or defence which truth ever inspires; and the abbot ordered them to be excommunicated in all the churches of his jurisdiction, and the tax to be levied by the bailiff of the liberty. Here might follow a list of 63 names of persons assessed to the tax, which was directed to be little more than 5*l*. on the whole manor and possession of the abbot situate at Redburn; but I will select only a few, in order to shew the designation of persons, and the rise and origin of surnames.

Of Adam de Besteney (since Bisney),	6 marks.
Of John Botyler, ———	12 pence.
Of the land of William Purfleye,	11
Of Robert Atte Feld, ———	40
Of John Atte Chirche, ———	2
Of Emma Atte Grene, ———	12
Of Christ. Jacob Atte Ponde, ———	12
Of Thomas Atte Hache, ———	18
Of John Atte Dene, ———	11
Of Roger Christmas, ———	12
Of Phe. Palmere, ———	12
Of Isabella Atte Hulle, ———	12
Of William Atte Bekke, ———	6

The queen dowager Isabella had dwelt at Langley since the time of king Edward the second's death, and there held the manor, in grant

(a) Quando Idyoma nostrum fuit corruptum.

from

from her son. The abbot discovered that a certain mill in that manor was used, in former times, to pay 20 shillings yearly to the abbey; and now, by process of law, the queen was compelled to pay this rent, and all arrears so long as she had the manor. It had been lost to the abbey for many years, and was an instance, how insecure was all landed property in those days, by reason of the private alienations, secret demises, and fraudulent conveyances, which the rigor of the feudal law, and the high authority of the lords, put the tenants on practising.

Richard II. the
28th abbot.

At this time the abbot obtained a restitution of a messuage of five acres of land at *Sandrugge*, which had been seized by the king's escheator, William de Trussel, during a claim which the abbot of Westminster made to it. This office of escheator was in great vogue, and of great utility in these ages; and this man styles himself the king's escheator *citra Trentam*. When, by seizing for the king, he became a judge of the true right, he settled the property without much trouble; and in this case Trussel, on perusing the claims of each, in consequence of a petition from Richard, decided in his favour and adjudged the estate to the abbey. In like manner the escheator had seized on the summer-house (a) of one John Purser, standing, he thought, too near the highway: on which, by petition of the abbot to the chancellor, the escheator is directed to make inquisition (b) into the nuisance; and find, who built it and when, and of whom held, and what is the yearly rent; and to return this verdict into chancery. This was done, and the summer-house adjudged to the tenant of the abbey, who had built it. The decision is dated thus, *Teste meipso apud turrin London. 21 Maii anno Regni nostri 12^o. (1339) (c).*

The attention of this abbot was not so wholly engrossed by law-suits and external concerns, but that he gave much improvement to the inward government of the house. He directed, for the better support of the monks table, an addition of 100 quarters of better malt to be provided, and 50 quarters of better corn than usual, from the manor at Norton: he repaired the roof, and all other decayed parts of the monastery, in the first and second years of his prelacy. He repaired also at that time the mills at Codicote and Laton, Moor-mill, and Park-mill (d), the latter he constructed anew, and enlarged the

(a) Solarium.

(b) By the oath of 12 men.

(c) Though this fact happened after Richard's death, it is related here, to illustrate the office and power of the escheator.

(d) *De mora et de parco*: still in being.

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pool, or mill-dam, by raising the banks: he augmented the pool of the abbey-mill, after repairing the same; and the meadow adjoining the pool, called St. German's meadow, he raised. He caused the hedges, ways, and closes, about St. German's, to be repaired; and sowed a croft there, of four acres, with acorns, intending to make a wood. He had sown this land four years together, and never had a return of the seed again; but this year, after sowing the acorns, he caused seven bushels of seed to be thrown on the ground; and, in the following autumn, the crop was about ten quarters of very good wheat. This year is said by my author (Walsingham) to have been fruitful in all the Chiltern, and this increase he considered as a prodigy of fertility, and that the abbot had not the like on any of the lands which he farmed. He rebuilt the mill at Stankfield, from the very foundation; built a new one, at the passage to Verulam; repaired a mill in or near the town, used for malt only; and raised the banks of the pool. He repaired also the mansion (a) at London; rebuilt the hall, chambers, kitchen, stables, and chapels; and augmented the rent, of the part leased out, 15 shillings. And, by the help of Richard de Herefet, then almoner, he built a house and offices, within the monastery, for the future residence of that officer.

He laid the first stone of a new cloister (b), reaching from the abbot's chapel towards the great cloister. On this stone his name was inscribed, with the year of Christ; and, under the same stone, he sprinkled the foundation with small relics, and some of the earth found with the bodies of Amphibal and his companions. He paid to the workmen, concerned in these employs, thirty shillings a week; and this he saved out of his income, by living in a very sparing manner; for, otherwise, his rents would not have sufficed, and he refused to borrow and encumber the barony. He caused also some repairs to be made to the farms at Tydenhangre; and he adorned the private chapel and chamber with some curious carved work. The remark of my author is, that, instead of expending money in these useless works, he ought to have paid the debt of the abbey: but it is a common fault, in the abbots of every great church, to leave

(a) This is called *Manerium*. The word manor is of Norman origin, and meant the Lord's abode, *Manoir*.

(b) This is probably the dark passage now remaining under the south window, without the wall.

the burdens, incurred by former works, to their successors; and to study new works, and often such as are needless.

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He obtained of the king the royal licence to hold the church of Appelton, in Yorkshire; without which licence, the Mortmain Act of Edward I. would have rendered it an impossible acquisition.

In the sixth year of his rule, he began to grow very weak and infirm, and was so far disabled, by the progress of the leprosy, that he was thought incapable of doing his duty: and a monk of Abingdon, named Richard de Ildesty, informed the pope of the same, in hopes to be elevated into his place, or appointed to be his coadjutor. The pope listened to the insinuation, and directed a letter to the bishop of Lincoln, requesting farther information, ‘for, he had heard that ‘the abbot had lost the organ of speech, and was wholly unable to ‘assemble with the sound and healthy.’ The bishop immediately sent to the abbey John de Offord, the dean of the arches, and Robert de Bromley, official, to fulfil this inquiry. The abbot, on hearing their business, dispatched the prior instantly to the king at York, where he was then holding a parliament; and the prior represented what an injurious invasion the bishop of Lincoln was making on the rights of the abbey, and how false it was to suggest, as Ildesty had done, that the abbey was suffering great losses, and that the buildings were all in ruins: he then presented a petition in parliament, ‘that ‘the king’s council, or some of the nobles, would inquire into the ‘truth of these charges, and why the keeper of the king’s privy seal ‘should affix the seal to a letter from Ildesty to the pope, to begin ‘this charge and accusation.’ The keeper, on being questioned, answered, he was so urged, pressed, and solicited, by some great men, to seal such a letter that he could not refuse it. And it is probable this was an artifice of some courtiers to get possession of the abbey’s property.

It is not said what steps the parliament directed to be pursued in consequence of the petition, nor what reception or answer was given to the bishop’s messengers. But, on the return of the prior, the abbot sent him to the chapter, to propose, from the abbot himself, a choice of a coadjutor, and named the prior, the arch-deacon, and two others, offering to appoint any one or two of them, as should be most agreeable to the chapter; on which they made choice of the prior, and signified this to the abbot. Then it was thought necessary to write a letter to the pope, to state the truth, &c. This being done, there was perfect peace and unanimity restored in the house.

But,

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But, in the year 1335, in the month of May, and before he had finished the ninth year of his elevation, the abbot died, and was interred, by the lord abbot of Waltham, in the presbytery near his two predecessors.

He had made great proficiency, at Oxford, in the new studies then become reputable, and excelled, as Leland writes, in arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. As a specimen of his ingenuity, he is said to have invented a clock that was a miracle of art: it exhibited the course of the sun and moon, the rising and setting of the fixed stars and planets, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, and, in short, the figures, operations, and effects, of all the heavenly bodies. He had begun this clock early in life, and then neglected it; but, being encouraged to proceed by the king when at the abbey on a visit, he resumed the work, and this royal exhortation made him very diligent in the execution; for, he would say, ‘though the abbey wants repairs, my successors may be able to build walls and mend tiling, but none, I believe, excepting myself, can ever finish this clock.’ As we have no scientific description of this piece of mechanism handed down to us, we can form no judgement of its merits, being ignorant of the principles that actuated the complex machine, and even of the materials whereof it was constructed: it would appear, however, to have been a master-piece for that age. He composed several writings that better declare his learning, though nothing more than the titles have come down to these times: he wrote of astronomical judgements, of demonstrative signs, of the chord and arch, of the eclipses of the sun and moon, of the right angle, and of arithmetic and computation.

There were but four colleges founded at Oxford prior to Wallingford’s time, namely, *University*, *Baliol*, *Merton*, and *Exeter*: yet the resort to these new foundations of learning was very great, and, if we may credit Richard of Armagh, the number of students in Oxford, in Henry the third’s time, was thirty thousand; but, if we reject the literal sense of these words, and allow them to mean only a great and unusual number, the reason of it was owing to the studious fame of the two new orders, and the emulation which sprang up among the old. These two orders had now been established in England about a hundred years, and all the men of any note, who had appeared during that period, were either Dominicans or Franciscans, as Roger Bacon, Alexander Hailes, Robert Grossthead, and many others; and this is very conspicuous on beholding the many voluminous works, compiled by them, and since published, compared with
such

such as issued from the monastic bodies. Now, the high pre-eminence, ^{Richard II. the 28th abbot.} to which they had raised themselves by their learning and public superiority in all reputable science, proved a powerful incentive to emulation in the ancient orders, and first suggested the design of sending young men to the college then existing at Oxford, and, afterwards, of endowing new colleges both there and at Cambridge; for, it was soon found, that this desire to excel could not be cultivated with effect in the monasteries, because the continual duty of the choir occupied their whole time, and allowed no vacant hours for private study; it was there thought enough, if the abbot and his higher officers had a little Latin, and such farther instruction as enabled them to execute their office; and, if they had one or two monks, who could keep their journals in Latin, and occasionally write a letter in Latin to the pope, it was all that was thought necessary or attainable.

This difficulty, of uniting the monastic discipline with a course of close study, was a subject that struck the attention of some of the great men about Henry the Third: and accordingly Walter de Merton, then chancellor of England, founded a college at Oxford in 1264, two or three years after Baliol, King of Scots, had founded another college; and about the same time, (viz. 1257,) Hugo de Balsam, prior of Ely, and then bishop, founded *Peter-House*, the first college in Cambridge, and afterwards modelled this new endowment on the plan of Merton. They were instituted in the time of Henry the Third, with a view to train up young men for the *offices* in the abbeys, and to give them that tincture of science which the abbey could not teach, and which the two orders only were found to possess. This emulation received countenance from Edward the first, and the two next kings, all of whom gave more encouragement to the new learning than to the old monkish orders (a): nor was the spirit, which the success and fame of the friars had excited, confined to the monasteries, it stimulated other generous patrons to endow colleges, and was the chief cause of the many new foundations that were made by the bishops and others, in the reign of the three first Edwards; inasmuch, that, at the death of Edward the Third, in 1377, there were seven colleges built and endowed in Oxford, and six in Cambridge.

(a) It had been the custom for two centuries back, and of course long before the new orders existed, to fetch even the engineers, and managers of the warlike machines then in use, from among the religious, who possessed all the learning of their time: but the old orders could no longer furnish fit persons, and the Franciscans had now the preference in supplying them, because they excelled both in abstract science and in all the arts of utility.

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But, beside the royal favour, and this rivalry for fame, there was yet another cause which operated very powerfully in promoting these foundations and endowments: for, it is to be remembered, that the ancient channels of liberality and charity to the monks were stopped and shut up by the statutes of Mortmain, and colleges became the prevailing objects of benevolence and piety. These seminaries were soon overstocked, and the monasteries could not employ all that were fit; then the rest were transplanted into the country churches, and became the secular clergy and the new endowed vicars.

The Benedictines, throughout England, roused by the motives I have mentioned, partook of the general spirit, and contributed largely to the maintenance of the scholars at the universities. In Edward the Second's time, the monks of Durham built and endowed *Durham College*, to train up their youth to be seculars or regulars (a): the monks of Gloucester, then also, built *Gloucester College* for the same uses, and it was afterwards enlarged, by licence of Mortmain, for other houses of the Benedictines, among which our abbey of St. Alban was one (b): *Canterbury college* was likewise founded and built, by Islip the archbishop, to educate youth for the supply of the abbey and cathedral at Canterbury, called Christ Church (c): these three were at Oxford. And, in the reign of Edward the Fourth, a prior was constituted, in a provincial chapter of their order, to overlook and direct the studies of their youth in the university of Cambridge.

It has been generally thought, and always said, that the monks were possessed of all the learning of their times. Now this can be true only of the times prior to the establishment of the frier-preachers and minors, or black and grey friers; for, these soon eclipsed all the monks, and left them with no other learning than some Latin, to enable them to understand what they chaunted, and a little more for their accounts and their correspondence: or, if some of the higher officers, and a few of the priests, had a tincture of science, still the great body of the monks were void of all instruction, except music, which was the only study either taught or used in the monasteries;

(a) This college fell at the general suppression; but, after lying in ruins fifteen years, it was re-endowed, in 1555, by Sir Thomas Pope, and then newly called *Trinity College*. Monast. II. 344.

(b) See more concerning this college in the life of John Wheathampstead, the 33d abbot, book VII.

(c) The famous John Wickliffe was here chosen second warden; but, being elected by the secular scholars and not by the regulars, he and they were displaced by archbishop Langham, and the monks put in their room. Wickliffe, while here, was tutor to Geoffrey Chaucer.

whereas

whereas the two orders not only distinguished themselves in all scripture learning and the favourite science of canon law, but cultivated every branch of knowledge then known; and we may see the whole extent of their erudition by the list of the sciences they deemed liberal, which were seven in number, namely, grammar, rhetoric, logic, music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. Yet, narrow as this field is in comparison with our present acquisitions, it is wonderful to behold with what penetration, and acuteness, and subtle enquiry, they searched into the recesses of nature, and with what fanciful ingenuity they raised new questions when demonstration and proof failed. But, though their labour may be commended, and their zeal applauded, they erred from the truth, by beginning to build on the false foundation of Aristotle and Ptolemy's *Almagest*. Such was the learning in vogue when Wallingford was public reader of divinity at Oxford; at which place, and from the friars, he doubtless learned his mechanic knowledge and geometric science. But that the preaching friars, both at home and abroad, were the most celebrated scholars in the last age, in this, and the next, will manifestly appear to any who shall peruse the *Ecclesiastic History of Dupin*, and the *Antiquities of Canisius*, and the *Continuation of Dugdale*.

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2^d abbot.

Edward I. had contributed other means, beside the two statutes already noticed, to curb the power of the pope and avaricious temper of the clergy, whom he thus endeavoured to make subject and obedient to him: for, he repeated and improved the Mortmain Act by three or four more, in order to obviate, with silent but sure effect, the many devices, by which the clergy still found means, though with a fraud, to be gaining estates, as by taking them in trust for the owner, for certain purposes and uses, and in a way of accounting to him, or with a pretence and engagement to provide for his children, &c.: these devices were considerably checked, though the clergy and dying testator called such checks profane and wicked; but, as this was a military reign, such proceeding of the king was prudent, in order to keep up, and prevent the utter loss of, the military aid: and, at length, this closed that immense gulph, in which all the lands of England were likely to be swallowed up. In the time of Edward III. passed the statutes of *Præmunire*, calculated to depress the civil power of the pope, and to break, if possible, the connection with Rome. Another very politic act of this Edward was to institute vicarages, and thus encourage a laborious parochial clergy, endowing the same out of the swoln possession of the regulars: for, though it was impracticable to deprive these bodies of lands or of tithes by force,

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yet they would consent to endow a vicar, and provide for his residence, on condition he was one of their body; but, on other terms, or to suffer the patronage to pass from them, they still refused.

The strict hand which the Edwards held over the regulars, and the great increase of academic foundations in the two universities, kept this branch of the clergy in their proper bounds; and, for these reasons, we find no mention of them in a public and general character, or, as taking any part in the government of the kingdom, and interfering in the functions of royalty. They now were not heard, except in some ineffectual opposition they made to the king's demand of aid; and their private government was so quiet and regular that very little novelty happened among them.

Such was the uniform and peaceable state of this abbey, except when interrupted by the disputes with the townsmen, which, indeed, lasted long, and were carried on with much animosity. In these contests, it is observable, that skill, management, temper, and ancient customs, were on the side of the monks; while perseverance, numbers, impetuosity, and the spirit of freedom (then spreading fast), befriended the townsmen. Both parties, however, as their scale preponderated, outraged justice; the people by open violence, and the monks by favour and secret perversion. For, when at length the former carried their point, they were intoxicated with their success, and could not enjoy their new condition with temper and moderation; and the monks, on the other hand, were still ready to resume, in the hour of prosperity and court-favour, whatever they had prudently given up in times of trouble and of tumult. Thus, after abbot Hugo, yielding to the pressure of circumstances, had granted the townsmen a charter of all their demands, they set no bounds to their licentiousness, and conducted themselves in a manner so wanton and so lawless, that, when the firm hand of Edward III. had restored domestic peace and good order, they furnished Wallingford, not only with an opportunity of punishing the evil doers, but with a pretext for depriving the borough of many of the privileges that had been conceded by Hugo. In short, though we may discern the rudiments of liberty in these exertions, they were so disfigured by violence, and the advantages gained so fluctuating, that it is obvious the principles of civil freedom were then but little understood: and, though we know, from co-eval circumstances of great moment, that the middling ranks of men were rising into consequence, and the lowest class began to be emancipated, yet the English form of government, at the period we treat of, was but a rude and imperfect cast of the admired and matchless constitution which we enjoy at this time.

End of Part I.

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